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New-Church Popular Series. [No. 11.

THE TRUE CATHOLICISM:

REVEALING

THE BREADTH AND COMPREHENSIVENESS

OF THE

NEW CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY
Benjamin Fiske
B. F. BARRETT.

"All doctrinals whatsoever, if derived from the Word, are accepted of the Lord if the person principled therein be in the life of charity."

Swedenborg.

PHILADELPHIA:
SWEDENBORG PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION,
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PREFACE.

THE term *Catholicism* is doubtless associated, in the minds of most people in Christian countries, with the Roman Catholic church and religion. And some may, therefore, think it a term not wisely chosen to make even a part of the title of a work like the present. But the qualifying adjective that precedes it, will, the author believes, render the use of the term unobjectionable to most people. Or, if not, they have only to read a single chapter or half a chapter, to learn that the Catholicism herein unfolded is very far from Romanism,—yes, and from anything hitherto formulated in the symbols, proclaimed from the pulpits, inculcated in the literature, or exemplified in the practice of any of the Protestant churches.

The author holds that there *is* such a thing as a *true* Catholicism. And if it has never been clearly exemplified, nor even understood or distinctly taught in the Christian Church established nearly

two thousand years ago, it is because that Church has been "Christian only in name, but not in essence and reality." But in the authorized Writings of the new and true Christian Church which we are assured "is just now at its commencement," we find—as might have been expected if this Church is really what it claims to be—the true Catholicism clearly taught as never before. And it is none other than the Catholicism of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the Catholicism of the Lord in his Divine Humanity.

To present a clear idea of this Catholicism, and to illustrate the subject by copious extracts from the Writings of the divinely illumined Swedenborg, is the main purpose of the present work. And the author cannot doubt that it will meet with a cordial response from all those who have caught something of the loving, large and catholic spirit of the Divine Master, and who are seeking to imbue the hearts of others with this same spirit.

But bigots of whatever name or creed, all narrow-minded and conceited sectaries to whatever church-organization they may belong, all who are strongly wedded to the *faith*-alone or *doctrine*-alone theory, and who doubt about the salvation of any

who do not think or believe very nearly if not precisely as they do—all such will read this book with no interest and derive from it no satisfaction. Very few of this class will deem it worth reading at all; and most of them, if they attempt to read it, will probably turn from it with disgust and loathing before they shall have reached the sixth chapter.

But it is confidently believed that the book will receive a warm welcome from all broad-minded and open-hearted Christians; and the author humbly trusts it may encourage and strengthen them in their efforts to promote a larger toleration, a truer charity and a higher unity than has hitherto prevailed; and possibly lead some to a careful investigation of the Writings so often quoted and so highly commended in these pages.

B. F. B.

GERMANTOWN, PA., April 1st, 1886.

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THE TRUE CATHOLICISM.

ABBREVIATIONS.

A. C.	stand for	Arcana Cœlestia.
A. E.	"	Apocalypse Explained.
A. R.	"	" Revealed.
B. E.	"	Brief Exposition.
Contin. L. J.	"	Continuation of the Last Judgment.
D. P.	"	Divine Providence.
D. S. S.	"	Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture.
H. H.	"	Heaven and Hell.
L. J.	"	Last Judgment.
N. J. D.	"	Doctrine of the New Jerusalem.
T. C. R.	"	True Christian Religion.

THE

TRUE CATHOLICISM.

I.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF DIVINE TRUTH.

THE system of religious truth unfolded and taught by Emanuel Swedenborg, is one of the most positive and clearly defined systems that was ever revealed, elaborated or conceived of. No writer on theology was ever more affirmative than this illustrious seer. No one was ever more positive. He never says, "I *think* this or that is true," or "it *seems to me* thus and so;" but he ever speaks with the authority of one who has positive knowledge of that whereof he affirms.

But, notwithstanding the crystal clearness with which he saw the truth, and the prophet-like confidence with which he declares what he saw—notwithstanding his every statement is made with the calmness and assurance that we might expect from one who *knew* what he was saying to be strictly

true, yet, of all writers on theological and religious subjects, he is the most indulgent or tolerant toward all forms of religious error innocently imbibed. To be able to grasp with firmness the highest truths and to state them with clearness and confidence, and at the same time to see and show how lower and apparently conflicting forms of the same truths may be innocently and even profitably held, is the mark of a strong, capacious and truly great mind.

Divine truth has innumerable phases, adapted to, or resulting from, the endless diversity of states of which the human mind is capable; and in every one of these phases it is truth, and is profitable to that particular mental state to which, in that particular form or phase, it is adapted. Minds of little breadth or depth do not readily comprehend this. To their feeble apprehension, truth has but one phase—but one form—and that the particular phase or form under which it presents itself to their circumscribed vision. Whoever holds it in any different form, holds not the truth, they think, but its opposite. They persuade themselves that the Word of God has only one meaning, and that this lies no deeper than their limited vision can penetrate. And they are ready to quarrel with all who think they see any other meaning; or, at least, to pronounce such sight illusory, and their views fanciful, or unscriptural and false.

But the most capacious and enlightened minds know that God's truth, like Himself, is infinite in depth of meaning and variety of aspect. They know that his Word is a well of living water, whose profound depths no finite intelligence has ever fathomed—whose wealth of meaning the centuries can never exhaust. It contains truth adapted to angels and men—yea, to the highest and most perfect angels, and to the lowest and most imperfect men. It is a Fountain at which the lofty and the lowly, the wise and the simple, the learned and the ignorant may alike drink and be refreshed. It contains truth for the Nations and the Ages.

And herein consists the perfection of the written Word, and its infinite superiority to all human compositions. Because it contains an infinity of meaning, therefore it is adapted to an infinite diversity of mental states—to the states, indeed, of all finite intelligences on earth and in heaven. And although that particular aspect or phase of truth presented to the wise, may differ widely from that which the simple are able to discern, yet if both are careful to reverence and obey the truth as they understand it, they do all that is required of them; and are both journeying toward the heavenly mansions. Both are enlightened by the truth, though in different degrees. Both are followers of Him who is "the Light of the world," though it be, perchance, at such unequal distances

from the central Luminary, that the light may be sevenfold greater to the one than to the other.

And since all the humble followers of the Lord, be their states as to good and truth ever so diverse, are owned of Him, and are in truth his children, therefore they should acknowledge and treat each other as brethren. They are all disciples of the common Master, though some may be farther advanced than others. They are all children of the common Father, though some may be older and riper in wisdom than others. They are all members of one and the same church, though some may be nearer and others more remote from the centre; some belonging, it may be, to the province of the eyes or ears, and others to that of the hands or feet. But as hands and feet are also essential to the completeness of the man, so are the people which these members represent, to the completeness of the church.

Such is the catholic teaching of the New Christian Church, whereof Swedenborg is the divinely commissioned herald and exponent. According to this teaching, it is not necessary to Christian union or brotherhood, that all should understand the Scriptures precisely alike. It is not necessary that all should apprehend their higher or more interior meaning. It is only necessary that they regard and reverence the Scriptures as the Word of God, and humbly strive to obey their teachings

as they understand them. If they do this, they are in a state of Christian charity. And although they understand the Word only in its lowest or literal sense, their hearts are at one with the angels in heaven, because they are at one with the spirit of Him who is the All-in-all of heaven; and internally, therefore, they are at one with those on earth who understand and obey the Scriptures according to their higher or more interior meaning.

The great purpose of Swedenborg's mission was to unfold the spiritual sense of the Word. And because he so often speaks of the exalted nature and unspeakable importance of this sense—of its being, to that of the letter, what the soul is to the body—of its being the genuine Word itself, while the mere sense of the letter is *not* the Word—therefore some are inclined to think that only those can have any knowledge of the Lord or of the spiritual things of his kingdom, who read and receive the teachings of Swedenborg. They think that those who have no knowledge of the science of correspondences, or of the spiritual sense of the Word as unfolded by this science, can have no proper understanding of the Christian religion, and no genuine Christian experience. They are inclined to regard all such as destitute of a true knowledge of the Lord and heaven, and as scarcely within the pale of the Christian church.

This is a serious mistake—a mistake which comes

from a partial or superficial view of Swedenborg's teachings. A more careful and comprehensive view of what has been revealed through him concerning the Word, will show us that this conclusion is not well founded. However highly he would have us prize the spiritual sense of the Word, and however he exalts it above the sense of the letter, he nevertheless would have us regard as Christians, and treat as brethren in Christ, all who reverence the Divine Word and humbly seek to follow its guidance, though they may understand it only in its literal sense. "There is no harm," he says, "in believing the sense of the letter, although the internal sense teaches otherwise, if it be done on account of simplicity" (A. C. 2395); that is, there is no harm in believing, in child-like simplicity, what is taught in the literal sense of the Word, even though such belief or teaching differs materially from the spiritual sense. And speaking of those who believe in simplicity "that God is angry, that He condemns and casts into hell those who live wickedly," "although this is not the real truth," he says:—

"If they live well and thus believe because it is so said in the Word, *the Lord accepts their belief as the truth,* because the truth is concealed within such belief; and this also appears before the interior angels, although they themselves [who believe the sense of the mere letter] do not see it."—A. E. 375.

Again he says:—

"Whoever believes in simplicity does not incur guilt, although what he believes *be not true in itself*, but apparent truth. As for example: if he believes that the Lord is angry, that He punishes, that He leads into temptation, and the like; or if he believes that the bread and wine in the Holy Supper are somewhat significative; or that the flesh and blood are somehow present therein in the way that they explain it; it is of no consequence whether they say the one or the other, although there are few who think of the latter; and if they do, provided it be in simplicity of heart, because they have been so instructed, and they still live in charity, it does them no injury."—A. C. 1798.

"The internal sense of the Word teaches that the Lord cannot possibly be angry and punish, much less can He curse and kill. Still, however, to those who from simplicity of heart believe the Word just as they comprehend it in the letter, this belief is not hurtful provided they live in charity. The reason is, that the Word teaches nothing else than that every one should live in charity with his neighbor, and should love the Lord above all things; and they who do this, have the internal contents of the Word within themselves."—A. C. 1408; also 3436; T. C. R. 256.

And, speaking of the exterior and interior goods and truths of the Word, the same illumined writer says that the belief in the literal sense of the Word, even when that sense is widely different from the spiritual, is accepted by the Lord as

if it were *the real truth,* provided the believer be in a state of charity.

"He who believes that, if he loves his father and mother according to the precepts of the Decalogue and because it is so commanded, he shall enjoy a long life, is accepted on the same ground *as if he had believed the real truth,* because he does not know that by father and mother in the supreme sense, are understood the Lord and his kingdom; by father is meant the Lord, and by mother his kingdom; and that by prolongation of days, or length of life, is signified eternal felicity. The case is similar *in a thousand other instances.*"—A. E. 375.

The doctrines of the various Christian denominations are drawn from, and are in agreement with, *some portions* of the literal sense of the Word. Therefore they who accept these doctrines reverently and in simplicity, believing them to be the very doctrines of God's Word, and seek to govern their lives according to their teachings—shunning all known evils as sins—have, deep within their hearts, the essential things contained within the doctrines—their very spirit and life; for the doctrine being drawn from the letter of the Word, as it lies in the externals of the believer's mind, is in correspondence with a higher truth not yet consciously perceived, which lies, however, none the less securely for all that, in the interiors of his mind. And so the believer is internally associated

with angelic spirits who regard the interiors of the doctrine and are in its light and life.

"There are interior truths in all doctrinals drawn from the literal sense of the Word, since this sense is like a well wherein is water; for in all and singular parts of the Word there is an internal sense, which sense is also in the doctrinals that are drawn from the Word. In regard to doctrinals derived from the literal sense of the Word, the case is this: that, when a man is principled in them, and at the same time is in a life according to them, he has in himself correspondence; for the angels who are attendant on him are in interior truths while he is in exterior; and so he has communication with heaven by means of the doctrinals, but yet *according to the good of his life*. . . . For the angels dwell with every one in his life's affection, that is, in the affection of the doctrinals according to which he *lives*, but in no case if the life disagrees therewith."—A. C. 3464.

There is, then, no harm to be apprehended from believing as the letter of the Word teaches, provided it be in simplicity and with devout reverence for the Word, and righteousness of life be the grand aim of the believer—although what he believes, or precisely as it is formulated in his creed, may not be true. This is plainly and many times taught by Swedenborg. And not only so, but he teaches that such simple and devout belief is *profitable* to the believer, and a means of conjoining him with the Lord and heaven, provided

he be in the effort to live according to the truth, as he understands it. Such is the connection between heaven and earth, and such the nature of correspondence between spiritual and natural truth, that such persons are drawn into close intimacy with the angels, and their minds are affected by the interior things of the Word, while they understand it only in the literal sense, and are wholly unconscious of the presence of the angels save as their presence is indicated by a serene and sweet internal peace. Thus, after telling us that, "when a man is thinking, while under holy influence, concerning the bread in the Holy Supper," "the angels are thinking concerning good, such being the correspondence;" and "when, under holy influence, a man thinks about raiment, the thought of the angels is about truth," he adds:—

"And so it is *in all other instances which occur in the Word.* Hence it may be seen what is the nature of the conjunction of heaven and earth effected by the Word, viz.: that a man who reads it under holy influence, is by such correspondence conjoined closely with heaven, and by heaven with the Lord, although he thinks only of those things in the Word which appertain to its literal sense. The essential holy principle which influences the man on such occasion, is derived from an influx of celestial and spiritual thoughts and affections, such as exist with the angels."—A. C. 3735.

Again :—

"All and singular the things of the Word are holy; but the holiness which is therein does not appear to *the understanding*, except to him who is acquainted with the internal sense thereof; nevertheless it appears to *the apperception*, by influx from heaven, to him who believes the Word to be holy. Such influx is wrought through the internal sense, in which the angels are principled, which sense, *notwithstanding it is not understood by man*, still affects him, because the affection of the angels who are in that sense, is communicated."—A. C. 5247. See also A. C. 6789, 3480, 3690; A. E. 778, where the same thing is taught.

Through the lower senses of the Word the Lord is able to reach and operate upon minds in a low or very external condition. That is why the Word in the literal sense is such as we find it. It is thereby adapted to the wants of natural men and children, and becomes even to them a divine medium of heavenly influences—a medium whereby they can be elevated into loftier and serener states.

Swedenborg tells us that the twelve chosen disciples, being merely natural men, "were unable to form any other idea of the Lord, than what the Jews at this day entertain concerning the Messiah whom they expect, viz.: that He would exalt them to dominion and glory above all the nations in the world." And the Lord, in addressing this state of mind, spoke of their "sitting upon twelve thrones,

and judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" which language they understood literally. And we are told why.

"The reason why the Lord so spake, was, that they might receive external truths, and thereby be introduced to internal truths; for in those external truths which the Lord spake, internal truths were stored up and concealed, and in process of time these latter are made manifest; and when this is the case, those external truths are dissipated, and serve only as objects or means of thinking about internal truths."—A. C. 3857.

Now, in the quotations here made—and they might be multiplied indefinitely—we are taught an important and wholesome lesson. We are taught that, although the Word contains a spiritual sense which is of infinite value, yet a knowledge of what this sense is, or what it teaches, is not indispensable to Christian discipleship. We are taught that men may be in the good of life, yea, in spiritual good—that they may be in conjunction with the Lord and in close communion with the angels of heaven, and thus have an interior and experimental knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the things pertaining to his kingdom, without even knowing that there *is* a spiritual sense to the Word.

Such, plainly, is the authorized teaching of the New Jerusalem on this subject. And the lesson to be derived from it, is this: That we who are of

the nominal New Church have no right to regard ourselves as nearer to the Lord or more truly his disciples than other Christians, simply because we understand the spiritual sense of the Word and accept all the doctrines of this Church: That we have not, on this account alone, any peculiar claim to be considered, or any right to consider ourselves, as the Lord's true church, to the exclusion of all others: And that we should regard and treat as Christian brethren all of whatever name who devoutly reverence the Divine Word and humbly strive to obey its precepts, even though they abide wholly in the sense of the letter, and have no knowledge of the spiritual sense as elicited by the revealed science of correspondences.

II.

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

WE have seen in the foregoing chapter, that, although there is a spiritual sense to the Word, which is to that of the letter what the soul is to the body, yet a knowledge of this sense is by no means essential to Christian discipleship. We have seen that, according to Swedenborg, persons who believe in simplicity what is taught in the letter of the Word, and who have no knowledge of its spiritual sense, may nevertheless be genuine Christians—humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and interiorly associated with the angels of heaven. All such, whatever their particular name or creed, belong to the Lord's kingdom and church. And we who profess to be, and humbly trust we are, of his kingdom and church, should regard and treat them as brethren in Christ, however they may differ from us in their understanding and interpretation of the Word.

But we know there is often a wide difference between the teaching of the spiritual and that of the literal sense of the Word. And if those who accept the teaching of the spirit, and those who abide in the sense of the letter, may yet fellowship

each other—if the spirit of Christ may dwell so abundantly in the hearts of both these classes of disciples, that they shall feel themselves to be brethren, then perfect agreement in doctrine or doctrinal statements cannot be indispensable to Christian union. There must be some more potent principle whereby the Lord's people may be cemented into one—some principle strong enough to overcome the antagonism of conflicting creeds or mere intellectual differences, and bind kindred hearts together. Is there any such principle? If so, what is it?

Look at the union among intimate friends—those who feel most strongly bound to each other. Perfect intellectual agreement is not the cord that binds them together. Very often persons are warmly attached to each other, whose opinions on many subjects differ widely. It is not the people whose *heads* but whose *hearts* are most like our own, for whom we feel the strongest friendship. If a person is deeply smitten with the love of moral excellence—if he has acquired a just appreciation and a profound admiration of the graces of meekness, humility, forbearance, uprightness, self-denial, resignation, trust, patience, courage and heroic self-sacrifice in the cause of country and of humanity, he will feel himself most strongly drawn toward those in whom he sees these virtues most strikingly exemplified. He will feel for them

the most ardent attachment. He may differ from them in opinion, or in his understanding and belief of religious doctrines; but if he is really a good man, he cannot help loving them for all that. Nay, he will love them more ardently than he does those who agree with him perfectly in doctrine, but in whom these virtues are wanting, or are less conspicuous. This will certainly be the case, unless he has been educated into the notion that mere *belief* is of paramount importance.

A person who has received the doctrines of the New Church into his heart and life, will feel himself actually nearer to those who know nothing of these doctrines, and who even profess the doctrines of the Old Church, provided they exhibit the spirit of the Master in their daily lives, than he will to those who profess their belief in the very same doctrines, but whose lives are selfish, sordid, thoughtless and unholy. If we have the spirit of Christ in our hearts, we shall love that spirit whenever and wherever we see it; and this, too, without regard to any difference there may be in our doctrinal beliefs. Nor is this a matter of mere volition. It is a law of our being, absolutely imperative where its controlling force is not counteracted by a misdirected education.

Here is a peaceful and happy family. Its unity is perfect. What produces and maintains that unity? Not similarity of *thought*, but similarity

of *feeling*. In thought its members may differ widely. The thoughts of the parents, perhaps, are beyond the intellectual grasp of any of the children. They are deeper and more comprehensive. The parents see and believe truths which none of the children, it may be, can fully comprehend. And so, too, the boundaries of thought which the elder children have reached, are quite beyond those of the younger. And those near the same age may differ materially in intellectual capacity, and in the opinions they form on various subjects. But there is a similar *feeling* in the hearts of all. Each member of the family loves all the rest, and loves whatever promotes their welfare and happiness; and although the love may be deeper and stronger in some than in others, the quality of the feeling is the same in all—just as heat is the same in the taper and in the sun and in all intermediate flames, however it may differ in intensity. And it is the love-element which produces such perfect unity in the family. It is this, and not their intellectual agreement or likeness, which binds them so closely together. It is the union of *hearts* and not of *heads*—a union all the more perfect, oftentimes, because of the intellectual differences.

Now, a well-ordered family is a fit representative of the Lord's church on earth. All true Christians are members of his family and household. They are all children of the Heavenly Father. Some

may be older or more advanced in wisdom than others. Some may have attained to a degree of knowledge which the others are as yet unable to comprehend. But love for the common Father and for each other is the principle that fills and animates all their hearts. They all have the Father's image stamped upon them, for they all have within them something of his Divine Spirit. They may understand the Word differently, some of them resting in its lower or more exterior and others receiving its higher or more interior senses; and their views of doctrine may differ in a corresponding degree. But their hearts are alike; therefore they are united as one family. They are one in spirit, one in desire and purpose, one in disposition and feeling, one in their ends and aims of life, one in their wish to know and their purpose to serve the Divine Master, each according to his ability. Thus they are one body in Christ—not on account of their perfect intellectual agreement, but on account of the similarity of spirit by which they are swayed and governed. Charity or mutual love is the controlling element in each one; and where this reigns supreme, intellectual differences are but little regarded and cannot produce separation.

How, then, is the unity of the church on earth to be brought about, or strengthened and maintained? Not by securing the assent of all profess-

ing Christians to the same creed, or doctrinal formulas; for so long as the Bible remains what it is, and men are differently endowed by birth, differently trained and educated, and subjected to different moral and religious influences from their earliest years, it is vain to expect entire uniformity in their doctrinal beliefs. Such uniformity is impossible so long as perfect freedom of thought and fidelity to each one's own convictions are encouraged and maintained. Nor is it desirable, or at all necessary to the unity of the church. What is most desirable and most needed is, not perfect uniformity of belief among Christians, but such an infusion of the Lord's own spirit and life into the hearts of those who profess to be his followers, as shall make them feel the relative insignificance of their doctrinal differences. What is needed is, not the overthrow or extinction of religious sects, but the general repudiation or casting out of the narrow and mischievous spirit of sect. Let creeds and denominational landmarks and denominational preferences remain—not, however, with the overshadowing prominence which they have hitherto enjoyed. But let the Lord Jesus Christ Himself descend with new and regenerating power into all the churches. Let the hearts of his professed followers be so suffused with his divine-human love, that they shall so far forget or rise above creeds, as to feel that mere doctrinal differ-

ences should not be a hindrance to Christian fellowship.

When this genuine revival shall take place—this new and only *real* advent of the Son of Man to the hearts of believers—then will Christians of different names feel that they are, indeed, one body in Christ. Then will the unity of the church be established in reality, though not in outward and organic form—a unity all the more perfect because of the diversity in doctrine and ritual which may be expected still to continue. All will then be, and will feel themselves to be, of the Lord's new and true Church, because all will experience an influx of new life as a consequence of their new perception and acknowledgment of the Lord in the hearts of all his children. Hear what the enlightened herald of the New Jerusalem says on this subject:—

"The several churches in the Christian world are distinguished by their doctrinals; and the members of those churches have hence taken the names of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, or the Reformed and Evangelical Protestants; with many others. This distinction of names arises solely from doctrinals, and would never have existed if the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal point of faith. Doctrinals would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they who are true Christians would leave to every one to receive accord-

ing to his conscience; while it would be the language of their hearts, that *he is a true Christian who lives as a Christian,* that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish, yea, all the animosities of one against another would be speedily dissipated, and the kingdom of the Lord would be established on earth. The ancient church which existed immediately after the flood, although dispersed over several kingdoms, was of such a character; so that, notwithstanding its members differed much from each other in respect to doctrinals, they still made charity the principal thing, and regarded each other's worship, not from the doctrinals of faith, but from the charity of life which entered into it. This is meant by what is said of that church (Gen. xi. 1), that 'they had all one language, and their speech was one.'"—A. C. 1799.

Of similar purport is the following, where Swedenborg is urging the paramount importance of charity, and the consequence of assuming it as the essential constituent of the church.

"Let this truth be received as a principle, that love to the Lord and charity toward our neighbor are the essentials on which hangs all the Law and concerning which all the Prophets speak, and thus that they are the essentials of all doctrine and of all worship, in this case the mind would be enlightened by innumerable things contained in the Word, which otherwise lie concealed in the obscurity of a false principle; yea, in this case all heresies would

vanish and be done away, and out of many *there would be formed one church, howsoever differing as to doctrinals and rituals*, either flowing from the above essentials, or leading thereto. . . . Supposing this to be the case, all would be governed as one man by the Lord, for all would be as members and organs of one body, which, although they are not of similar form nor of similar functions, have nevertheless relation to one heart on which they all depend both in general and in particular, be their respective forms ever so various. In this case, too, every one would say of another, *in whatsoever doctrine or in whatsoever external worship* he was principled, 'This is my brother: I see that he worships the Lord, and that he is a good man.' "—A. C. 2385.

Again:—

"If charity were in the first place, and faith in the second, the Church would have another face; for then none would be called Christians but they who lived according to the truth of faith, that is, lived the life of charity. And then, too, it would be known what charity is. Then, also, there would not be more churches than one, by distinguishing between them according to opinions concerning the truths of faith; but the Church would be called one, containing all who are in the good of life, not only who are in the region where the Church [having the written Word] is, but also who are out of it. The Church would thus be in illustration concerning the things which pertain to the kingdom of the Lord; for charity illustrates, and in no case faith without charity. The errors, too, induced by faith separate from charity, would be clearly

seen. The face of the Church would then be as the face of the Ancient Church, which had no other doctrinals than those of charity."—A. C. n. 6761.

"Doctrinals do not constitute the external, much less the internal of the Church; nor do they serve to distinguish churches before the Lord. But this is effected by a life according to doctrinals, all of which, if true, regard charity as their fundamental. For what is the end and design of doctrinals but to teach how a man should *live?*"—Ibid. 1799.

"When love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, that is, the good of life, are made the essentials with all and with each individual, then churches, how many soever they may be, make one; and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord. This is also the case in respect to heaven where there are innumerable societies, all different from each other; but still they constitute one heaven, because all are principled in love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor [but in different degrees]."—Ibid. 2982.

The doctrines of heaven as revealed through Swedenborg are so consistent, so beautiful, rational, and satisfying to both the understanding and the heart—so superior in every respect to the doctrines hitherto believed and taught throughout Christendom—that their receivers are in peculiar danger of being so dazzled by them as to overlook or fail to appreciate what is infinitely more important, viz., the new and high and holy *life* to which these doctrines continually point. They are in

danger of forgetting that the belief in salvation by doctrine (however the belief may be unconfessed) is not a whit less false, nor less fatal to the development and growth of the heavenly life, than the confessed belief in the dogma of salvation by faith alone. In their admiration of the heavenly doctrines, and great joy in their reception of them, they are in danger of having their attention diverted or turned away from the heavenly life—the great end which these doctrines were given to promote. And in doing this, we do the very thing which was represented by Lot's wife who was changed to a pillar or statue of salt for looking back upon the smitten Sodom.

"To look back behind him, is to have respect to doctrinals which are of truth, but not to a life according to doctrinals, which is the life of good; for truth is posterior, and good is prior; and that is called *behind* him which is posterior, and that *before* him which is prior. . . . Truth is said to avert itself from good, and to have respect to doctrinals [and the same is the case with minds that receive truths of doctrine] when it is no longer concerned about the nature and quality of the *life* which the man of the church lives, but about the nature and quality of the *doctrine* which he professes; when, nevertheless, it is a life according to doctrine which constitutes a man of the church, but not doctrine separate from life; for when doctrine is separated from life, then by reason of the vastation of good appertaining to life, there is a vastation also of truth appertaining to doctrine;

that is, truth becomes a statue of salt. This every one may know in himself, who has respect to doctrine alone, and not to life."—A. C. 2454.

Such and so catholic is the teaching of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. It does not insist on uniformity of belief, nor regard this as necessary to Christian fellowship or to the unity of the church. Clearly defined as its doctrines are, it nevertheless admits that considerable diversity of opinion on points of doctrine, is quite compatible with Christian life and character; and would have us recognize as Christians "all who *live as* Christians, that is, as the Lord teaches," however they may disagree with us in their doctrinal beliefs; and regard and treat as brethren all good men and humble worshipers of the Lord, "in whatsoever doctrine, or in whatsoever external worship" they may be principled. And not only so, but it teaches that when charity is regarded as *fundamental* in the church, "all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals will vanish;" and out of many churches distinguished by their doctrinals, "there will be formed *one* church, however differing as to doctrinals and rituals;" and that this one church, like the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, will be more completely and perfectly one, because of this very diversity; just as the human body is a more perfect unit, be-

cause of the diversity in form and function of the various organs composing it.

But the charity which is the essential constituent of the Lord's true church and the basis of union among Christians, is not what the natural man understands by this word. It has regard to *use* rather than to persons. It is an interior spiritual principle. As defined by Swedenborg, and as understood and taught in the New Christian church, it is the love of use—the love of serving individuals, the community, the state, the church, the Lord's kingdom on earth. And this love includes, or is identical with, the love of whatever is true, sincere, just and right.

"Charity toward the neighbor," says Swedenborg, "consists in doing what is good, just, and right, in every act and in every employment. It extends itself, therefore [or has relation], to everything that a man thinks, wills and does."—H. H. 360, note.

"He who is in charity toward his neighbor from internal affection, is in charity toward him in all and singular the things which he thinks and speaks, and which he wills and does. It may be said of a man or an angel when good is his neighbor [or is the ruling purpose of his heart], that, as to interiors, he is charity itself. So widely does charity toward the neighbor extend itself."—A. C. 8124.

"All are principled in the good of charity who

have conscience, that is, all who, for the sake of what is just and right, good and true, are unwilling to depart in any degree from what is just and right, good and true—for this must proceed from motives of conscience; and such as are led hereby to think well of their neighbor and to wish well to him even though he be an enemy, and this without any view to recompense, are they who are principled in the good of charity, whether they be without the church [where the Word is] or within it."—A. C. 2380.

III.

ANCIENT GROUND OF CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

IF we look at the wide diversity existing among men in respect to hereditary endowments, and duly consider the different moral and religious influences by which they are surrounded from their infancy, the different intellectual training to which they are subjected, the different doctrines taught them by their parents and religious teachers, and the different ways in which the Scriptures may be understood because of their adaptation to the various states of the human mind, we shall see how improbable it is that Christians will ever come to a perfect agreement in all their doctrinal beliefs. If all are left in freedom, and encouraged to think for themselves, and permitted to avow their honest thought, there will ever remain considerable diversity of opinion, at least upon minor points of doctrine. Yet this diversity should not prevent or mar the unity of the church. It will not, if all regard charity as the primary thing. On the contrary it will strengthen the union among Christians, and render it the more perfect.

How was it with the church in very ancient

times? All did not then *believe* alike. We are told that they differed much in doctrine and ritual. Yet this difference did not divide them, because they were all principled in mutual love or charity. They were all, as we learn from Scripture, "of one lip, and their words were one;" which, according to Swedenborg, signifies that "they were all principled in one doctrine in general and in particular;" and that was the doctrine of charity. For he adds:—

"The doctrine is one, when all are principled in mutual love and charity. Mutual love and charity are effective of unity or oneness, even among varieties, uniting varieties into one; for let numbers be multiplied ever so many times, even to thousands and tens of thousands, if they are all principled in charity or mutual love, they have all one end, viz., the common good, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord Himself; in which case the varieties in matters of doctrine and worship are like the varieties of the senses and viscera in man, which contribute to the perfection of the whole."—A. C. 1285.

Again, this illumined writer at the very commencement of his treatise on "The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine," says: "I will, by way of introduction to the doctrine which follows, make some observations concerning the doctrine of charity as held by the ancients," which doctrine "is at this day, with other excellent things, altogether

lost." And then he proceeds to tell us what the doctrine of charity among the ancients was.

"The doctrine of charity, which is the doctrine of life, was the essential doctrine in the ancient churches. And that doctrine conjoined all churches, and thereby formed one church out of many. For they acknowledged all those as members of the church who lived in the good of charity, and called them brethren, *however they might differ respecting truths* which at this day are called matters of faith."—N. J. D. 9.

Again:—

"In ancient times there were several churches together, and a difference between them *as at this day* in regard to doctrinals; but still they made one in this, that they acknowledged love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor as the principal and very essential constituents of the church; and that doctrinals were not designed so much to direct their thoughts as to direct their lives. And when this is the case, that love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, that is, the good of life, are made the essentials with all and with each individual, then churches, how many soever there are, make one, and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord."—A. C. 2982.

Thus, according to the teachings of the new and truly catholic Church, perfect uniformity in men's doctrinal beliefs is not to be expected or aimed at. It does not exist even in heaven. No two angelic societies, and no two angels in any society, believe precisely alike.

"The Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is various in respect to what belongs to faith, insomuch that there is not one society, nor even one in a society, who, in those things which relate to the truth of faith, is entirely agreed with others in his ideas. Nevertheless the Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is one. The reason is, that all account charity as the principal thing. . . . Whoever is principled in charity, loves his neighbor; and with regard to his dissenting from him in matters of belief, this he excuses, provided only that he lives in goods and truths."—A. C. 3267.

If, then, the angels do not entirely agree in their views of truth, why should we expect perfect agreement among men? Why should there not be as great diversity in the Lord's kingdom on earth as there is in his kingdom in the heavens? And this, too, without destroying the harmony or disturbing the peace of the church. The New Christian Church tells us that this must needs be.

"With respect to the Lord's kingdom on earth, that is, with respect to his church, the case is this: that, since it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, it must needs be various and diverse as to those doctrinals, viz.: one society will profess one thing to be a truth of faith, because it is so said in the Word; another society will profess another thing for the same reason; and so on. Consequently the church of the Lord, since as it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, will differ in different places, and this not only among societies in general, but sometimes

among particular persons in each society. Nevertheless, a difference in the doctrinals of faith is no reason why the church should not be one, provided only there be unanimity in willing what is good and doing what is good."—A. C. 3451.

Such is the uniform teaching of the herald of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. And how replete it is with the large and tolerant spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ! We learn from it, that charity was the essential doctrine in the ancient churches; and that this so predominated over mere belief or faith, that all who lived in the good of charity were acknowledged as "members of the church," and were "called brethren, however they might differ respecting truths." We learn that the ancients, although "they differed *much* from each other in respect to doctrinals" (A. C. 1799), did not allow those differences to disturb their harmony or mar their peace. They called each other brethren, and felt and acted toward each other as brethren, notwithstanding their doctrinal differences. And the reason was, that all held charity to be fundamental. And where this is the case, "the disagreements arising from mere doctrinals" vanish, or fail to exert a disturbing influence. (Ibid.) Therefore the various churches among the ancients, notwithstanding their doctrinal differ-

ences, were closely bound to each other, and together formed one church.

And it is a significant fact that Swedenborg, in the very commencement of his comprehensive treatise on "The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine"—which, he assures us, "is the same with the doctrine that is in heaven"—proceeds to explain the doctrine of charity as held by the ancients, "by way of *introduction* to the doctrine which follows." It is as if he had said: "The primary thing in that system of doctrine which I am about to unfold, and which it has pleased the Lord to reveal to me out of heaven, is the doctrine of charity. And in order that this doctrine may be better understood, I will here state in the outset *what it was* as held and practised in the ancient churches; how it led those churches to tolerate a wide diversity of opinion in matters of faith—to regard and treat each other as brethren, notwithstanding that diversity; and how, through its softening and cohesive influence, out of many and various churches—various in respect to doctrine and ritual—it formed one harmonious and united church."

And when, near the close of that introductory chapter, he adds, "that the doctrine of charity, which among the ancients was held in such estimation, is at this day, with other excellent things, altogether lost—for who, at this day, is aware

what charity is in the genuine sense of the term?" —yet "the whole Sacred Scripture is nothing else than the doctrine of love and charity, which the Lord also teaches" (Matt. xxii. 37–39)—it is as if he had said: "Now, this ancient doctrine of charity, which I have just explained, and which at the present day is utterly unknown—certainly is not practised—in the churches of Christendom, is, in the New Jerusalem, to be restored to its ancient pre-eminence. It is the essential doctrine of the Word of God. In the New Church, as in the churches of ancient times, this is to be held paramount to every other doctrine. And it is to achieve results in the New Church, similar to those which it produced in the ancient churches. It will manifest itself or reveal its genuineness in similar ways. It will lead all who are really of the New Jerusalem to tolerate a wide diversity of opinion in matters of faith, for so did the ancient churches. It will lead them to think less of what people *believe*, than of how they *live*. It will cause them to acknowledge and treat as brethren all good men of whatever name or creed;—to recognize as Christians, and as worthy members of the church of Christ, all who live *like* Christians, whatever be their doctrinal beliefs."

What is here put into the mouth of Swedenborg, is but a fair and legitimate inference from the manner in which he introduces and closes his re-

marks upon the doctrine of charity in that introductory chapter of the treatise on "The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine." And this inference is amply sustained by numerous passages which might be cited from his other works, in which the paramount importance of charity is insisted on. Note, for example, the following, which might be multiplied indefinitely:—

"If the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal point of faith, doctrinals would then have been only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they who are true Christians would leave to every one to receive according to his conscience; while the language of their hearts would be, that he is a true Christian who *lives as a Christian*, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish."—A. C. 1799.

"There are two things which conjoin the men of the church, viz., life and doctrine. When life conjoins, doctrine [that is, *difference* in doctrine] does not separate; but if only doctrine conjoins, as at this day is the case within the church, then they mutually separate and make as many churches as there are doctrines. . . . But that doctrine does not separate if life conjoins, is evident from this, that he who is in the good of life [that is, in charity] does not condemn another who is of a different opinion, but leaves it to his faith and conscience, and extends this rule even to those who are out of the church; for he says in his heart

that ignorance cannot condemn any, if they live in innocence and mutual love."—A. C. 4468.

"It is evident what another face the church would have, if the good of charity were in the first place, that is, were the essential thing, and the truth of faith in the second, that is, were the formality thereof. The face of the church would then be as the face of the ancient church, which made the church to consist in charity, and had no other doctrinals of the church than those of charity."—Ibid. 6761.

Then see how emphatically Swedenborg condemns the practice of the churches of his day, who, he says, "separate themselves according to dogmas; and he who believes otherwise than as the dogma teaches, is cast out from their communion, and is defamed."—(A. C. 4689.) And he declares that if charity (involving, as true charity does, love to the Lord) were regarded as fundamental, and the practice of the churches were in accordance therewith, there would be no such thing as *dealing* with men or excommunicating them on account of alleged heresies. Heresies, indeed, would not be named or thought of. "In this case all heresies would vanish and be done away, and out of many there would be formed one church, *however differing as to doctrinals and rituals.*" And speaking of the schisms and heresies which had arisen with the decline of the Christian church, he says:—

"These would never have existed, if charity had continued to live and rule; for in such case they would not have called schism by the name of schism, nor heresy by the name of heresy, but they would have called them doctrinals agreeable to each person's particular opinion or way of thinking, which they would have left to every one's conscience, not judging or condemning any for their opinions, provided they did not deny fundamental principles, that is, the Lord, eternal life, and the Word, and maintained nothing contrary to divine order, that is, contrary to the commandments of the Decalogue."—A. C. 1834.

But it is needless to multiply extracts. The writings of Swedenborg abound in just such teaching as the foregoing. And was there ever a broader or more genuine catholicism inculcated? In view of this teaching, on which side lies our chief danger? On the side of excessive toleration—a too broad and inclusive liberalism? or on that of a too narrow and exclusive sectarianism? On which of these sides are all professing Christians, in the degree that they are unregenerate, most prone to err? Certainly not on the side of excessive catholicity.

IV.

BELIEVERS IN TRIPERSONALISM.

IT must be clear to every reflecting mind, that the doctrine concerning the supreme Object of worship must be the central doctrine in every theological system. All the other doctrines will be shaped and colored by this. In the degree that this is erroneous, error must needs pervade all the rest. Just as in any system of philosophy, sociology or political cconomy, if the central idea is wrong, the whole system that is adjusted to it, will be equally wrong.

One of the great and fundamental errors into which the former Christian Church fell at an early day, and which led to its final consummation, was that concerning the Divine Trinity. The doctrine on this subject, which had been almost universally accepted by Christians, was that set forth in the Athanasian creed, in which it was taught that God is *tripersonal*, or exists as three distinct persons. That creed says: "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost"—three persons in one God. And Swedenborg says: "Every one who reads this creed with his eyes open, may perceive that a

trinity of Gods was the only trinity thought of by those who composed the Council of Nice, whence this creed, as a posthumous birth, was first introduced into the church." And he adds: "That no other trinity [than a trinity of Gods] is understood throughout all Christendom, is a necessary consequence of making that creed the standard of knowledge respecting God, to which every one pays an implicit obedience." He further says that, "as a chain depends on the staple from which it hangs, so does the whole body of theology depend on a right idea of God as its head;" and that "every one has a place in heaven according to his idea of God." And if his idea of God be altogether incorrect, he cannot be in heaven. "No one in heaven can pronounce such a phrase as a trinity of persons, each of whom separately is God; the heavenly aura itself, in which their thoughts, like sounds in our air, travel and undulate, resists [or renders such utterance impossible]."—T. C. R. 173.

And, speaking of the pernicious influence of this false notion concerning the Trinity, he says: "The present faith of the church, which in its internal form is a faith in three Gods, but in its external form in one God, has extinguished the light of the Word, and removed the Lord from the church, and has thus precipitately turned its morning into night."—(Ibid. 177.) And the

prayers of those who cherish this false notion of the Trinity, are represented as of no avail—as not attended to, or as not ascending to heaven.

"The prayers of every man who lives in a Christian country and does not believe in the Lord, are not listened to; they are in heaven like ill-scented odors, or like eructations from corrupted lungs; and although he may fancy that his prayer is like the perfume of incense, yet in its ascent to the angelic heaven, it is but like the smoke of a conflagration, which, by the violence of the wind, is driven back into his eyes; or like incense from a censer under a monk's cloak. This is the case from henceforward with all worship which is directed toward a Trinity of distinct persons, and not toward a Trinity conjoined in one person." —T. C. R. 108.

Again, he says:—

"A division of the Divine Trinity into persons has introduced not only night, but also death into the church. . . . It is a truth, that, to implant in children and young people the idea of three divine persons, to which is unavoidably annexed the idea of three Gods, is to deprive them of all spiritual milk, and afterwards of all spiritual meat, and lastly of all spiritual reason; and the consequence is, spiritual death to all those who confirm themselves in such an opinion. . . . He who confirms himself in the belief of a plurality of Gods by believing in a plurality of persons, becomes by degrees like a statue with movable joints, in the midst of which Satan stands and speaks through its artificial mouth."—Ibid. 23.

Now, from passages like these in the writings of Swedenborg, some have concluded (and the conclusion would seem at first thought to be just and legitimate), that all Christians at the present day, who belong to churches in which the tripersonality of God is believed and taught, are necessarily believers in and worshipers of three Gods; and are therefore in a state of spiritual darkness, alienation, and death—mere carcasses, or forms filled and animated by the spirit of Satan; that their prayers either do not ascend to heaven, or ascend as "ill-scented odors," and not as sweet perfume; that the Lord is far removed from all such, and that therefore they are left in a state of midnight darkness. Even some ministers in the nominal New Church have inferred from passages like those here quoted, that the Lord has actually "left" all such Christians, and no longer has his abode with them.*

But when we look at the churches in question—when we observe the noble men and women whose names are enrolled there—when we consider how much of the Master's spirit many of them exhibit—how much of all that is righteous, and holy, and gentle, and brave, and self-denying, and pure, and good they embody—we are sure there must be some mistake in this matter. We are sure that, whatever Swedenborg may have said, the Lord

* See *New Jerusalem Magazine* for July, 1839, p. 379.

has *not* "left" all these people. We recognize among many of them abundant evidence of his quickening and life-giving presence. And when we examine more critically the writings of Swedenborg, we find that the mistake has arisen from a partial or superficial view of his teachings. We find reason for believing that it has come from fixing the mind too intently upon a single class of passages like those above quoted, and overlooking or ignoring another class which qualify and limit their meaning. It was in a similar way that the doctrine of salvation by faith alone originally crept into the Christian Church, that is, by observing all that is said in the Word about the importance of faith, and overlooking all that is said of the importance of charity.

It is not to be denied that Tripersonalism is a great and pernicious error—a dogma which has wrought immense mischief, and against which we cannot too carefully guard our children and all with whom we have influence. All that Swedenborg has said of its baleful tendency and effects, is undoubtedly true. Yet a belief in tripersonalism was providentially permitted as the only means whereby Christians could be saved from the utter denial and rejection of the Divine incarnation, and of anything like Divinity, therefore, in Jesus Christ. Such denial would have been a more fatal error than that of Tripersonalism. Swedenborg says:—

"All and singular the things of the Athanasian doctrine concerning the Trinity and concerning the Lord . . . have come to pass by the Divine Providence. For unless they had accepted a trinity of persons at that time, they would have become either Arians or Socinians; and hence the Lord would have been acknowledged as only a mere man, and not as God, whereby the Christian Church would have perished, and heaven would have been closed to the man of the church."—A. E. 1109; A. C. 6993.

But because Tripersonalism is a grievous error, we must not conclude that all who have subscribed to this doctrine are, therefore, in a state of spiritual darkness and death, and incapable of offering a prayer acceptable unto the Lord. This may be the case with many. But there are also many who believe this doctrine in simplicity, because it appears to be plainly taught in the Word, but whose ruling purpose is to do the will of God in all things; and these are not especially harmed by it. Swedenborg says "there is *no harm* in believing the literal sense of the Word, although the internal sense teaches otherwise, if it be done in simplicity of heart." (A. C. 2395.) And he also admits that the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead, is in accordance with the teaching of the apparent or literal sense of the Word, as appears from the following:—

"Hence also it is manifest that, when there are *three* in the sense of the letter, there is only *one* in

the internal sense, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are not three Gods, but one, and that in the Lord [Jesus Christ] the whole Trinity (*Trinum*) is perfect."—A. C. 2663.

Here it is conceded that, according to the apparent truth in the literal sense, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are *three*, although the internal sense teaches that they are *one*. And as we are assured that "there is no harm in believing the sense of the letter, if it be done in simplicity of heart," therefore there can be no permanent harm in believing in simplicity, as many Christians do, the doctrine of three persons in one God.

Again: speaking of the innumerable varieties and differences in doctrinals among those who constitute the Lord's kingdom in heaven as well as on earth, Swedenborg says:—

"They who are of the spiritual church . . . acknowledge for truths what they have learned from others, . . . and each abides in that doctrinal, and calls it true, which is taught in his own particular church." And since these do not enjoy internal perception like those of the celestial church, therefore he adds: "It is not to be wondered at that they are disagreed about that most essential of all truths, viz., the Lord's Divine, Divine-Human, and Holy Proceeding. The celestial perceive that they are not three but one; whereas the spiritual abide in the idea of *three*, yet are willing to think that they are one. Since, therefore, there are dissensions about this most essential

point of all, it may be seen that the varieties and differences of doctrinals are innumerable."—A. C. 3241.

Now, is a difference on "this most essential point of all," or is the belief of the Tripersonalists—those who "abide in the idea of *three*, yet are willing to think that they are one"—to be regarded as fatal to all spiritual life? Does such a belief—an error, though it be, upon a fundamental point—necessarily shut the Lord out from the believer's heart? Does it close his interiors against the sweet influence of the angels? Does it preclude the possibility of his offering that most acceptable kind of sacrifice—the worship of a righteous and useful life? Does it necessarily shut the gates of the Kingdom against him, and consign him to the realms of darkness, and render his prayers "like ill-scented odors, or like eructations from corrupted lungs," unacceptable to the Lord? By no means, if his ruling desire is to know, and his settled purpose is to do, the will of the Lord. So far from it, Swedenborg proceeds to add in the same paragraph:—

"But notwithstanding there are so many varieties and differences of doctrinals [including that of a tripersonal God, to which allusion had just been made], still they together form one church, when all acknowledge charity as the essential of the church, or, what is the same thing, when they have respect to life as the end of doctrine; that is,

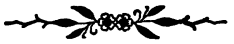
when they inquire how a man of the church *lives*, and not so much what are his *sentiments*."

It thus appears plain that, according to the divinely authorized teachings of the New Church, men may differ "about that most essential of all truths"—the nature of the Divine Trinity—some believing in tripersonalism, according to the apparent teaching of the literal sense, and others holding to the unipersonality of God as revealed in the internal sense; yet all may "acknowledge charity as the essential of the church," and may "have respect to life" as the great end of doctrine. And this is just what they *ought* to do—just what the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ requires them to do—just what the members of the church signified by the New Jerusalem *will* do. And we are told that when they do this, "they together form *one church*."

Here, again, we find the same exalted wisdom and genuine catholicism as before; the same acknowledgment of the supreme importance of *charity*, and of its power, when duly exalted, to demolish all those sectarian barriers which have sprung from mere doctrinal differences, and out of many churches various as to doctrine, to form one harmonious and united church.

And if those of the organized or nominal New Church would be as catholic as are the doctrines they profess, they will not condemn even the Triper-

sonalists, nor separate themselves from their company as though they were disfellowshiped or a people to be shunned; but they will regard and treat them as brethren, and acknowledge them as the children of God and members of his church in so far as they live the life of charity, notwithstanding their erroneous belief concerning the Divine Trinity. This, clearly, is what the entire spirit and explicit teaching of the doctrines revealed for the church of the New Jerusalem, counsel.



V.

BELIEVERS IN SALVATION BY FAITH ALONE.

ANOTHER great and pernicious error incorporated into the creed of the former Christian Church, is the doctrine of justification and salvation by faith alone. The influence of this doctrine has been most disastrous throughout all Protestant Christendom. This is what might have been reasonably expected from the very nature of the doctrine. For it has taught that if people only *believe* certain doctrines which Church Councils have determined to be essential to salvation, they are sure of heaven, however sinful may be the lives they live. This doctrine was first formulated by Martin Luther, and was held by him as the central doctrine of the Christian religion. He often called it *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*,—"the article by which the church must stand or fall." And how he understood the doctrine, or what he thought of its importance and efficacy, may be seen from the following paragraphs:—

"Be a sinner, and sin boldly; but believe and rejoice more boldly in Christ, who is the conqueror of sin, of death and the world; we must sin so long as we remain here. This life is not the habi-

tation of justice; it is sufficient that we know, through the riches of the glory of God the lamb which taketh away the sin of the world, sin cannot pluck us away from Him, although we *were to commit fornication or murder a thousand and a thousand times in a day.*"*

"A Christian cannot, if he will, lose his salvation by any multitude or magnitude of sins, unless he ceases to believe; for no sins can damn him, but unbelief alone. Everything else, provided his faith returns or stands fast in the Divine promise given in baptism, is absorbed in a moment by that faith."—*Luther de Captivitate, Bab.*, ii. 264. *Comp. Dispu.*, i. 523.

This "faith alone" dogma has greatly darkened the minds of Christians in respect to spiritual things, and finally induced upon the Christian church a state of spiritual desolation and death. It is this doctrine, according to Swedenborg, which, in connection with that of Tripersonalism, of which it is one of the legitimate offspring, contributed more than any other to undermine and destroy the first Christian Church. Therefore, in exposing and commenting upon the numerous errors into which the great body of Christians in

* Esto peccator, et fortiter; sed fortius fide et gaude in Christo, qui victor est peccati, mortis et mundi; peccandum est, quamdiu hic simus. Vita hæc non est habitatio justitiæ. Sufficit quod agnovimus per divitias gloriæ Dei agnum qui tollit peccatum mundi, ab hoc non avellet nos peccatum, *etiamsi millies, millies uno die fornicemar aut occidamus.*—Lutheri Epis. tom. II. Jenæ, 1556, p. 845.

his day had fallen, there is no one of which he speaks with greater severity, or to which he attributes greater power of mischief, than this doctrine of justification by faith alone. Thus he says:—

"That there is at this day so great darkness throughout the Christian churches, that the sun gives no light by day, nor the moon and stars any light by night, is occasioned solely by the doctrine of justification by faith alone; for it inculcates faith as the only means of salvation."—B. E. 79.

And, speaking of the real quality of this doctrine, as viewed interiorly, he says, it is one "into which neither the law of the Decalogue, nor charity, nor good works, nor repentance, nor desires after newness of life, have any entrance;" and that, although it is asserted that these things "spontaneously follow," it is, at the same time, held that they are "without any use either to preserve faith or to procure salvation."—Ibid.

Such is the interior and real nature of the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Yet this doctrine, we know, holds a conspicuous place in the creeds of nearly all the Protestant churches in our own day, as it did in the time of Swedenborg. Indeed, it is not only *professed* by a great multitude of Christians, but is regarded by many as one of the fundamentals of the Christian religion.

What now is the inference to be drawn from all this? Must we conclude that all those who belong

to the churches wherein the doctrine of faith alone is professed, are interiorly of a like quality with the doctrine itself? Must we believe that all such are necessarily without charity, or good works, or repentance, or any desire for newness of life? Must we infer that they are all enemies of God and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel? This, we are aware, is the conclusion to which some have arrived, and we cannot deny that it is fair and legitimate while attention is confined exclusively to a single class of passages in the Writings. They point to what Swedenborg has said of the nature and destructive tendency of this doctrine, and straightway conclude that all who profess to believe it, or who have subscribed a creed of which this is a part, must needs be as bad as the doctrine itself.

But these persons do not employ a similar kind of logic in other cases. They do not reckon as true Christians all who *profess* Christianity; nor do they regard as angels all who *profess* the doctrines of heaven. Yet why not, if people are to be judged by their professed creeds, or mere *beliefs?* If a mere profession of belief in the doctrine of justification by faith alone, is to be accepted as evidence that the believer's heart is as bad as the doctrine itself, then why should not a mere profession of belief in the heavenly doctrines, be received as evidence of the heavenly character of every

such believer? Why should not a mere profession of the Christian religion, prove every such professor to be a true Christian?

But a glance at existing facts patent to all eyes, is sufficient to convince every candid mind of the fallacy of such reasoning. If there are persons professing to believe the doctrines of heaven who are not angels, then we may believe that among the many who profess the solifidian creed, there are some whose characters *are* quite angelic; and observation and experience will confirm such belief. For it cannot be denied that some of the best men and women upon earth—some of the meekest, gentlest, purest, humblest, most patient, devoted and Christ-like—are to be found in the very churches where the doctrine of salvation by faith alone is acknowledged and taught. And none will be more ready than the members of the New Church themselves, to concede that there are *some* who accept or profess the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, who are very far from being angels.

Doctrines, then, or professed beliefs, are no certain criterion by which to judge of the real character of the believers. Men may *believe* like angels, yet *live* like devils. And so, on the other hand, they may profess great errors, and really think they believe them; yet they may hold the errors in such a way as to receive little or no harm from them. They may live so near to the Lord, may

have their hearts so imbued with his Spirit, may seek so earnestly to do his will, that the falsities which they believe or profess, *will not be falsities with them;* or *if* falsities, they will be accepted of the Lord for truths, and their malevolence be warded off by the Divine power and presence. Such persons are of the number of those, of whom it is said: "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

If, now, we turn to the writings of Swedenborg, we shall find all and more than all that we have here stated, amply sustained by his catholic teachings. Notwithstanding his frequent and emphatic condemnation of the faith-alone dogma, and his oft-repeated assertion as to its pernicious tendency and the spiritual desolation it has wrought, we do not find him condemning indiscriminately all who profess this doctrine, and placing them without the pale of the Christian church. On the contrary, we find him freely and often conceding that there are many excellent people among them—people whose lives are so imbued with the good of charity, that this error with them loses its inherent malevolence, and becomes quite harmless. Thus he says:—

"It is said that faith alone saves, which in itself is false, especially with the evil who thereby exclude the good of charity, as if it contributed nothing at all to salvation. But this falsity grows

mild with those who are in the good of life; for they apply it to good, saying that faith alone saves, but that it is *not* faith unless together with its fruit, consequently unless where there is good." —A. C. 8311.

Again, speaking of some innocent people, who "make a profession of faith [that is, "faith alone,"] and think nothing of charity, by reason that they are so instructed by their teachers, and do not know what charity is," he says:—

"Nevertheless these same persons live the life of charity toward their neighbor, because they live in the life of good. It is *no injury* to such that they make profession of faith, and consider it alone to be saving, like others; for in their faith there is charity, whereby is signified all the good of life both in general and in particular."—Ibid. 2388.

Among those who profess the solifidian doctrine, there is a difference as wide as that between heaven and hell. Some of them are desperately wicked, and act in conjunction with evil spirits; while others, professing the very same doctrine, strive to live according to the precepts of the Word, and are, therefore, internally associated with angels. Speaking of the former of these classes, Swedenborg says:—

"They who think, believe and *live* from the doctrine of faith alone, and of justification thereby, have no respect to God in their lives, but only to self and the world; and they who look only to

self and the world in the course of their life, adjoin themselves to the hells; for all who are in the hells make no account either of good or evil. In a word, for men *to live* from that doctrine is to confirm themselves in the life, that it is of no consequence to think, to will, or to do good, inasmuch as salvation is not from that source."—A. E. 233.

But the same illumined writer tells us "that there are *very few* who thus *live* from this doctrine, although it is believed by the preachers that all who hear their preachings are under their influence." And this, he says, "is of the divine providence of the Lord." Even in his day, "the greater part" of Christians belonging to churches wherein the solifidian doctrine was believed and taught, were not principled in that doctrine, did not really understand it, or held it in such a way that it was to them quite harmless. Thus he says near the close of the very paragraph from which we have just quoted:—

"The greater part of those who are born within the churches where the doctrine of faith alone and of justification thereby is received, do not know what faith alone is, nor what is understood by justification. Wherefore when they hear these things from their teachers they think that a life according to the precepts of God in the Word, is thereby understood; for they believe this to be faith, and also justification, not entering more deeply into the mysteries of doctrine. Such persons, also, when

they are instructed concerning faith alone, and concerning justification thereby, believe no otherwise than that faith alone is to think concerning God and salvation, and how they ought to *live;* and that justification is *to live before God.*"—A. E. 233.

And the same in substance is repeatedly taught elsewhere in the Writings.

"There are persons who, from the doctrine of the church and from their teachers, believe faith to be the only means of salvation, or who only know from others but do not interiorly affirm nor deny, and at the same time live a good life from the Word, that is, because the Lord has so commanded in his Word; these do not . . . adulterate the goods nor falsify the truths of the Word; therefore they have conjunction with the angels of heaven. Few, likewise, of these know that faith is anything else but believing in the Word; they have no idea of the dogma of justification by faith alone without the works of the law, because it transcends their understanding."—A. E. 778.

"Something shall now be said of those who, although they are in the churches where faith alone is acknowledged, do not falsify the Word. Such are they who do not separate faith from life but conjoin them, believing that they make one like affection and thought, or like heat and light in summer, from the conjunction of which arises all germination. . . . They, therefore, who thus conjoin life and faith in confession and in practice, have the life of faith.

"There are some also [in the churches which acknowledge faith alone] who neither know nor desire to know that faith is anything else than to

believe those things which are taught in the Word, and do them. For they see that to believe and do is faith; but that to believe and not to do, is a faith of the lips only and not of the heart, that is, a faith without and not within the man."—A. E. 800.

"There are three degrees of the reception of the doctrine of justification and salvation by faith alone. The first degree is the acknowledgment of that doctrine; the second degree is the confirming it in one's self; and the third degree is the living according to it. To acknowledge it belongs to the thought, to confirm it in one's self belongs to the understanding, and to live according to it belongs to the will. . . All that which enters only into the thought and the understanding does not condemn, but that which enters into the will condemns; for this enters into the life and becomes permanent."—A. R. 634. See also A. E. 710, 750, 764, 798; A. C. 6256.

It was in this outer court of the mind—in this comparatively harmless way, that the doctrine of faith alone, we are told, was held by "*the greater part*" of those within the Christian church in Swedenborg's day. And further, he tells us that those people whose purpose it is to keep God's commandments, although *professing* the doctrine of faith alone, really constitute "the church which is called the New Jerusalem," and which, he says, "is *to tarry among* those who are in the doctrine of faith separate from charity, while it grows to its fullness, until provision is made for its reception among greater numbers."

"But in that church there are dragons who separate faith from good works, not only in doctrine but also in life; whereas the rest *in the same church* who live the life of faith which is charity, are *not* dragons, although *among* them; for they know no otherwise than that it is agreeable to doctrine that faith produces the fruits which are good works, and that the faith which justifies and saves is to believe those things which are in the Word *and do them.*"—A. E. 765.

From all of which it will be seen that the herald of the New Jerusalem does not unchurch all who profess the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, though he declares this to be one of the most pernicious of all the errors that have crept into the Christian church. He does not call all the believers of this doctrine *dragons.* On the contrary, he assures us "that there are *very few* who *live* from the doctrine," and that "the greater part" of those who profess it, "are *not* dragons, although among them;"—that they generally understand that justifying and saving faith "is to believe those things which are in the Word and *do* them." And he even goes so far as to say, that these people—*the greater part,* be it remembered, of the faith-alone professors—constitute, in our day, "the church which is called the New Jerusalem;" for no one will pretend that this church has yet "grown to its fullness." These constitute the *real,* in contradistinction to the professed or *nominal,* New Jerusalem.

So sensible and discriminating is this heaven-illumined teacher! So just and reasonable and consistent and catholic in all his teachings! So free from the least taint of narrowness or bigotry! So preëminent, so truly inspiring and grand in their catholicity are the authorized teachings of the New Christian Church. Let those who accept these teachings endeavor, individually and collectively, to exemplify their large, tolerant and heavenly spirit, and they (or the new and heavenly doctrines they profess) will ere long become as "a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid."

VI.

FURTHER ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE light which has come into the world since the date of the Last Judgment (1757), and in consequence of that event, has penetrated in a greater or less degree all the churches in Christendom; yes, and Heathendom also has been touched by its rays, and a new Morning has dawned on India, as must be plain to all who have read Mozoomdar's "Oriental Christ." And this is just what Swedenborg's repeated declarations would have led us to expect.

"So long," he says, "as the dragon with his crew continues in the world of spirits, into which he was cast, so long it is impossible for any divine truth united with divine good, to pass through unto men on earth."—T. C. R. 182.

The fair inference to be drawn from this is, that divine truth could and would pass from heaven to men *after* the dragon had been removed from the world of spirits, or after the Last Judgment had been executed in that world. But we are not left to mere inference on this point. On the contrary, we are expressly told that the influx of divine truth and good into the minds of men, *actually*

became more free and universal after the Last Judgment than it was before.

"The state of the Lord's kingdom [on earth] became different after the Last Judgment from what it was before; as the reception of divine truth and good became thereby more universal, more interior, more easy, and more distinct."—A. E. 1217.

Again, Swedenborg says "that the state of the world *and of the church* [meaning all the denominations in Christendom] before the Last Judgment, was as evening and night, but after it, as morning and day." (Contin. L. J. 13.) And he tells us why:—

"So long as there were congregations of such spirits between heaven and the world, or between the Lord and the church, man was unable to be enlightened. It was as when a sunbeam is cut off by a black interposing cloud, or as when the sun is eclipsed, and its light arrested, by the interjacent moon. . . . Now since all these interposing congregations *were dissipated* by the Last Judgment, it is plain that the communication between heaven and the world, or between the Lord and the church, has been restored."—Contin. L. J. 11.

And one of the consequences of the restoration of this long interrupted communication, was, as might have been expected, a general enlightenment of the minds of men here on earth.

"After the dragon was cast down. . . . there was light in the world of spirits, because the in-

fernal societies *which were removed*, had been interposed like clouds which darken the earth. *A similar light also then arose in men in the world*, giving them new enlightenment."—Contin. L. J. 30.

The obvious meaning of this is, that not a small handful of people—not the few readers of Swedenborg's writings merely—but mankind generally received new enlightenment. And the churches, too, even those that still profess the doctrines of tripersonalism and faith alone, have not failed of their share of this general illumination. Whatever their creeds may say, it is certain that the members of these churches *think* very differently now from what their predecessors before the Last Judgment thought. So that, while these churches, as to their creeds or outward profession, are similar to those that existed prior to 1757, yet their internal perceptions and heart convictions are entirely different. They see truth which persons professing substantially the same doctrines a hundred years ago, had no conception of. And this, too, accords with the teachings of Swedenborg. For, speaking of the future state of the church, and the changes consequent upon the Last Judgment, he says:—

"But as for the state of the church, this it is which will be dissimilar hereafter. It will be similar indeed in the outward form, but dissimilar in the inward. To outward appearance divided churches will exist as heretofore; their doctrines

will be taught as heretofore; and the same religions as now will exist among the Gentiles. But henceforth the man of the church will be in a more free state of thinking on matters of faith, that is, on spiritual things which relate to heaven, because spiritual liberty has been restored to him." —L. J. 73.

From this we learn that the Church (meaning all the churches or denominations in Christendom) was to remain similar, in outward appearance, to what it had previously been. That is, the several churches would preserve substantially the same organization, the same creed, and the same ritual. They would, to outward appearance, continue divided as they had been, and would profess substantially the same doctrines as they then held. Yet *internally* these churches would be different from what they had been. That is, the people composing them would be in a different internal state, and would *think* differently from what they had thought on religious subjects, because of the greater "spiritual liberty" into which they had been brought.

And no one who regards attentively the character, beliefs and condition of the churches of our day, can fail to see that this prediction has been literally fulfilled. Indeed it must be obvious to the most casual observer, that the people composing the various churches, though professing substantially the same creeds which were held a hun-

dred years ago, *think* or *believe* very differently from the men of that day upon nearly all religious subjects.

These remarks and quotations are made for the purpose of showing that the habit, not uncommon with some persons, of taking the language which Swedenborg used in reference to the church as it existed prior to the Last Judgment, and applying it to all the churches professing similar doctrines in our own day, is inconsiderate and unauthorized. The language is not applicable, *because* these churches are in a different state from those that existed a hundred and thirty years ago; or because (to cite Swedenborg's own language) although they are "similar in the outward form," they are "*dis*similar in the inward." When, therefore, it is said that the churches in Swedenborg's day were in terrible darkness because of the prevalence of this or that particular dogma, it must not be inferred that all who profess the same dogma now, are therefore in similar darkness. Clearly they are not. If Swedenborg wrote the truth in the passages above cited, they certainly should not be. And careful observation of existing churches proves conclusively that they are not. However they may have retained their creeds for the most part unchanged, and preserved their external *status* generally, they have all undergone important internal changes within the last thirteen

decades. They have all been moving Eastward by slow degrees—advancing into the light and warmth of the New Jerusalem. This, we believe, is the opinion of all the most careful observers, and the most intelligent and thorough students of Swedenborg. Perhaps no better New-Church authority on such a subject could be cited, than Rev. Dr. Bayley of London. In the last of his "Twelve Discourses on Essays and Reviews," after describing the nature of the New Dispensation, he proceeds :—

"It will be seen to be no narrow sectarian denomination, but universal principles we have in view. New principles which build up heaven in the human soul, and which will form society into harmony with themselves, thus making a new heaven and a new earth. We rejoice to observe these principles making their way, not only in the formation of a definite body of men who designate themselves the New Church, or New Jerusalem Church, but also in the more enlightened and liberal doctrines and loving activities which are leavening all churches.

"A hundred years ago, religion seemed almost entirely dead; but now the signs of resurrection multiply around us. Compare the Church of England of to-day, though loaded with the grave-clothes of old times, earnest, thoughtful, active as she appears in a large number of her ministers and laity, liberalizing her institutions, chafing against the old forms and old creeds, as she appears from time to time now, in her meetings for reforms, and

in her noblest productions—compare her, we say, with the half-sensual, half-formal, miserable mass, which bore that name a century since, and we have a spectacle most delightful to contemplate. The icy incrustations of ages are moving, the refreshing spring of a new era is making its warm breath felt, and its brilliant light be seen. It is so in all churches and out of all churches. There is movement, life, everywhere. An increasing number, a minority perhaps yet, but a large minority, are as earnest to inculcate love to God and man, and the absolute necessity of good works in man's salvation, as if the article which declares man to be saved by *faith alone*, did not form one of the thirty-nine."—Pp. 24, 25.

But to return to the subject more immediately under discussion.

"Is it possible," some will ask, "that people may profess the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and the doctrine of three persons in one God, and still be in a regenerate state, still constitute a portion of the Lord's true church, and, as such, be entitled to our fraternal regard and Christian fellowship?" Certainly it is. And not only so, but the idea is in strict accordance with the teachings of the New Church, taking Swedenborg as its herald and exponent. "Well then," it may be rejoined, "if such great and pernicious falsities as these—falsities, which more than all others have contributed to darken and destroy the church—may be believed or professed with-

out imperiling the believer's salvation and without permanent injury to the soul's higher life, what heresies can you name that are really damning? If errors such as these do not necessarily interfere with the believer's regeneration nor prevent his salvation, if they do not prevent his conjunction with the Lord and fellowship with the angels, nor render it impossible for him to live an upright, holy, Christian life, then what errors can?"

None whatever, answers the New Church—no mere intellectual misapprehensions or mistakes. Although these and all other errors are more or less blinding and harmful to the believer, and therefore to be avoided as far as possible, they do not of themselves close within him the gates of the Kingdom. A pure and holy life is not incompatible with the belief or profession of many and great errors. A belief in the doctrine of Tripersonalism as held and taught in most of the churches, does not necessarily prevent the believer from shunning evils as sins against God. Such is the explicit teaching of the doctrine of heaven. Accordingly Swedenborg says:—

"It is, however, provided that every one, *in whatever heresy he may be with respect to his understanding*, may still be reformed and saved, provided he shuns evils as sins, and does not confirm heretical falsities in himself [which is done only by an

evil life]; for by shunning evils as sins, the will is reformed, and by the will the understanding, which then first emerges out of darkness into light."—D. P. 259.

Again, we are told "that they within the church [where the Word is] may be regenerated by means of *any doctrine whatsoever*" (A. C. 6765); and that, although "there are so many different dogmas and doctrinals, several of which are altogether heretical, yet *in every one of them* salvation is attainable." (Ibid. 3993.) It is said only those who have made some progress in regeneration, have conscience. The merely natural man has no conscience. Yet we are told that "within the church there are *some of all denominations* who are endowed with conscience—though their conscience, nevertheless, is more perfect in proportion as the truths which form it approach nearer to the genuine truths of faith."—Ibid. 2053.

No: it is not mere errors of the head, be they ever so great or fundamental, but depravity of heart—evils of life—selfish and infernal loves—which shut souls out of the kingdom of heaven. This the herald of the New Church repeatedly declares.

"Heresies themselves do not occasion man's condemnation; but an evil life, together with confirmations of the falsities contained in any heresy by misapplication of the Word, and by reasonings that originate in the natural man, are what con-

demn him." And the reason which is obvious, is also given. "For every one by birth is introduced into the religion of his country, or of his parents, is initiated into it from his earliest years, and afterwards continues in the same persuasion," "being prevented by his engagements in the world" from extricating his mind therefrom. But "he who simply abides in the religion of his country, who believes in God, and (in case he be of the Christian Church) believes in the Lord, esteems the Word holy, and lives according to the commandments of the Decalogue from a religious motive, such an one does not bind himself to the falsities of the religion he professes."—D. S. S. 92.

Such, doubtless, is the case with a very large portion of the members of the various Christian denominations in our day. People generally belong to the church in which they were born, and profess the doctrines which their parents and grand-parents professed, and which were taught them in their early childhood. And as many of them as strive to obey God in all things, and live according to the commandments of the Decalogue —and no doubt these constitute a large proportion —are not internally wedded to the false doctrines they profess, and therefore are not permanently harmed by them. Their falsities are unnoticed by the angels, for they are not falsities of evil. Therefore they will be unnoticed by those on earth whose character is closely allied to that of the angels—by all who would judge men by their

works, and by the spirit they uniformly exhibit, rather than by their professed beliefs.

"Inasmuch as the angels of heaven," says Swedenborg, "do not perceive anything else in a man but his love, and thence his affection, desires and delights, consequently his *ends*, on account of which he thinks in such or such a manner, therefore when they perceive in him the love of truth for the sake of the uses of life, which are the true ends, then they do not see any falsities from evil; and if peradventure they see falsities which are not from evil, still *they know that these falsities do not hurt*, because evil is not in them. Falsities derived from evil are the real falsities from hell; the reason is, that these falsities are forms of evil, and thus in themselves also are evils."—A. E. 867.

When all professed Newchurchmen, or all who accept the doctrines of heaven as now revealed, come to feel and act like the angels, they too will not notice the falsities of such as are in the good of life, knowing that theirs are not falsities from hell.

VII.

BELIEVERS IN MODERN UNITARIANISM.

WE are aware that there exists a wide difference of opinion on many doctrinal and religious subjects, among that class of Christians know as Unitarians. But none of them, so far as our knowledge extends, believe in the supreme or proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. However they may differ on other points, they all agree, we believe, in the denial of this doctrine. Yet this is the central doctrine in the church of the New Jerusalem—yea, the very corner-stone of this church. The importance of acknowledging the absolute Divinity of Jesus Christ, the Divine in the human, the Father in the Son, is strongly emphasized and constantly insisted on by Swedenborg throughout his writings. "There are two principal things," he says, "which constitute the church, viz.: to acknowledge the Divinity of the Lord in his Humanity, and to apply truths from the Word to life." (A. E. 209.) And in many places he speaks (A. E. 45; A. C. 10,112) of the Divine Humanity as the fundamental doctrine of heaven, and of the reception and acknowledgment of this doctrine as essential to sal-

vation, or to true and heavenly life. (A. E. 45; A. C. 10,112.) He says, furthermore, that "those who have denied the Divine of the Lord, and have acknowledged only his human, like the Socinians, or Unitarians, are out of heaven."

But are all professed Unitarians, then, to be counted as spiritual reprobates? Are they to be shut out of the Kingdom because they are *Unitarians*, or because they do not believe in or openly acknowledge the Divine Humanity? Is this Unitarian heresy so dreadful that all who live and die in the professed belief of it, must needs find their abode among lost spirits? If this is to be accepted as the teaching or meaning of Swedenborg, then it is in direct conflict with much that he elsewhere teaches on the subject of doctrine. For he not only tells us that true doctrine does not save a man, nor false doctrine condemn him, but he declares that a person "may be regenerated by means of *any doctrine whatsoever*" (A. C. 6765); and that "*in every one* of them [that is, of the doctrines professed by Christians, no matter how heretical] salvation is attainable." (Ibid. 3993.) And not only would this view array Swedenborg against himself, but it is contrary to reason and to the conclusion irresistibly forced upon us by undeniable facts and the observation of Christian character. "By their fruits ye shall know them," saith the Lord.

When, therefore, we contemplate the beautiful and fruitful lives of such men as Channing, and Greenwood, and Follen, and Tuckerman, and the Wares, and a host of others professing the same faith—nominal Unitarians, all of them—we are forced to conclude, either that Swedenborg has been misapprehended by some of his readers, or that he was himself mistaken in regard to what he taught about Arians and Socinians. But we shall find that in this as in other instances, the error is not Swedenborg's. It is not his teaching that is in fault, but the understanding of his interpreters.

"A saving faith," says Swedenborg, "is a faith directed toward the Lord God, the Saviour Jesus Christ." (T. C. R. 342.) And the faith of Unitarians, it is alleged, is *not* so directed; therefore it is not and cannot be "a *saving* faith." Such, briefly, is the shape which the argument takes; and it seems quite conclusive. "But what is the first requisite of a faith directed toward Jesus Christ?" This is the very question which Swedenborg imagines some one to ask, and we have his own reply in these words: "I answer, it is an ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT HE IS THE SON OF GOD." Again in the same paragraph, he says: "Every one who desires to be a true Christian, ought to believe that JESUS IS THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." Now, every Unitarian, we presume, will tell you that he believes this. And if so, he

has "a saving faith," "a faith directed toward the Lord Jesus Christ." He acknowledges Him to be "the Son of the Living God." So far, then, as the mere matter of *belief* is concerned, he has, it would seem, all that is necessary to make him "a true Christian," according to the high authority just quoted.

But Swedenborg also teaches that the acknowledgment and worship of the Lord in his Divine Humanity, is essential to salvation—inside, though not outside, of Christendom; and that no one can be a true Christian who is not in such acknowledgment and worship. And this also is true.

But here, again, we are liable to be deceived, and many *are* deceived, by appearances—misled by mere lip-profession. We are apt to think that all who *profess* to believe in and worship the Divine Humanity, really do so; and that all who make no such profession, deny and reject the doctrine of the Divine Human. But we of the professed New Church ought not to be so beguiled and ensnared by appearances. We ought to rise above the fallacies of the senses into the realm of realities. For we know that the worship of the heart, which is the *essential* thing, may be, and often is, very different from that of the lips; that, while the acknowledgment and worship of the latter may be according to the truth, that of the former may be far from it; and *vice versâ.*

It does not follow that a man who worships the Lord with the lips, does therefore *really* worship Him; nor that he who offers Him no external and formal worship, does *not* worship Him in reality. So a man may talk much of the Divine Humanity, and be earnest in his professions of faith, love and reverence, who knows nothing of the Divine Humanity in his heart. The remark is often made, that, when a person has much religion *to speak of*, it is quite probable—almost certain—that he has but little of the right sort. So a man who really knows but little or nothing of the Divine Humanity —who has, we mean, but little *heart*-knowledge of it—may endeavor to make up for his deficiency, or perchance to conceal it, by much *talk about* it. And on the other hand a person who never talks at all about the Divine Humanity—who has seldom, if ever, heard the expression—may, nevertheless, be a devout and sincere worshiper of that Humanity. It is not with the lips but *with the heart* that the Divine Humanity is truly acknowledged and worshiped. "To act according to the precepts of the Lord," says Swedenborg, "is truly *the worship* of Him." Again, he says:—

"The *real* worship of the Lord consists in the performance of uses; and uses during a man's life in the world, consist in the faithful performance of one's duty in his particular vocation; that is, in serving his country, society and his neighbor from

the heart, and in acting with sincerity in all his relations. These uses are in the highest degree the exercises of charity, and those whereby the Lord is principally worshiped."—A. C. 7038.

And who are those that really believe in the Lord, or that acknowledge Him in his Divine Humanity? Not those only who accept the doctrine on this subject as revealed from heaven. Real belief and acknowledgment is something more than mere lip-confession—something more, indeed, than mere intellectual appreciation or assent. Those and only those really believe in the Lord, who endeavor to lead a righteous life, or to *live* according to the Divine precepts.

"By believing in the Lord," says Swedenborg, "a man has conjunction with him, and by conjunction, salvation. To believe in Him is to have confidence that He will save; and because no one can have such confidence but he who *leads a good life*, therefore this also is meant by believing in Him."—A. R. 67.

"To believe in the Lord is not only to acknowledge Him, but also to keep his commandments; for the bare acknowledgment of Him is a matter of thought only, arising from some little understanding of Him; but obedience to his precepts is a matter of acknowledgment from the will likewise. Therefore when a man acknowledges the Lord only from the thought of the understanding, he approaches Him with only one half of his mind; but when he keeps his commandments he ap-

proaches Him with his whole mind; and this is to *believe*."—T. C. R. 151.

"To acknowledge and worship the Lord [or the Divine Human], is to live according to his precepts, that is, to live the life of faith and charity. The life of faith consists in doing the Lord's precepts from obedience, and the life of charity consists in doing them from love."—A. C. 9193.

"Whoever [really] believes in the Lord, shuns evils as sins; and on the other hand, whoever shuns evils as sins, believes in Him. Therefore to shun evils as sins, is the sign of faith."—A. E. 936.

It is quite possible, then, for a person to be in the real *heart* acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity, who is not in any such oral acknowledgment. This is the undeniable teaching of the New Church on this subject. None who are inwardly evil, do truly or really acknowledge the Divine Humanity, whatever they may profess; while all who are in the life of charity, and thus are inwardly good, are in the *real* though they may not be in the *formal* acknowledgment of this central doctrine. Accordingly, Swedenborg says: "This [the Divine Human] is denied *in heart* by all who are in the life of evil, that is, by all those who despise others in comparison with themselves, who bear hatred toward all who do not pay them due respect," etc. "Hence it is evident," he continues, "that they who are in the life of evil cannot acknowledge the Lord [that is, not *really*, or *with the*

heart], but form to themselves innumerable contradictions against Him, since they are receptive of an influx of fantasies from hell. Whereas, they who are *in the life of good*, acknowledge the Lord [in his Divine Human—for it is of this that the author is here speaking] since they are under the influx of heaven, the principle whereof is love and charity."—A. C. 2354.

Here it is clearly taught that all who live a righteous life, do *really* acknowledge the Lord's Divine Human; while all who are in the life of evil, however they may acknowledge it *with their lips*, do not acknowledge it *in reality*.

Again, speaking of the Lord's Divine Human, Swedenborg says:—

"This, also, they extinguish within themselves, who contend in favor of faith alone, and do not live the life of faith; for they believe the Lord's Human to be purely human, not unlike the human of another man; whence also many of them deny the Divine of the Lord, although *they profess it with the mouth*. But they who *live the life of faith* [as many do who profess faith alone], adore the Lord with bended knees and humble hearts as God the Saviour, thinking nothing at the time *from doctrine* concerning the distinction between the Divine and the human natures. . . . Hence it is evident that, in respect to these, the Lord's Divine Human *is in their hearts*."—A. C. 4724.

Here it is plainly taught that some really deny the Divinity of the Lord, who nevertheless "pro-

fess it with the mouth;" while others, who "live the life of faith," though professing doctrines that are false, and neither knowing nor thinking anything about the Divine Humanity, are really in the acknowledgment and reception of that Humanity. They have the very spirit and life of this doctrine within them; for "the Lord's Divine Human is in their hearts."—A. C. 2574.

"There are angels who, while they were men, conceived an idea of the Lord's Human as of that appertaining to any other man; in order that these may be together with the celestial angels in the other life (for ideas inspired by the affection of good are what effect conjunction in that life), such misconception is dispelled by the internal sense of the Word, and so they are perfected. Hence it may be seen how precious to the angels are the things contained in the internal sense of the Word, although they may possibly appear of small consequence to man, whose idea on such subjects is so obscure that it can scarcely be called an idea."—A. C. 2574.

Again: all who are internally conjoined to the Lord, must needs be members of his true Church—yes, members of the New Jerusalem—no matter what may be their external church relations. And Swedenborg says that this conjunction may take place, "with the simple in faith and in heart," *before* there is any open and formal acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity.

"Before the Lord's Humanity is acknowledged,

[that is, externally and formally] to be Divine, there is indeed *a marriage of the Lord with the Church*, but only among those who approach the Lord and think of his Divinity, and *not at all whether his Humanity be Divine or not;* thus the simple in faith and in heart do, but men of learning and erudition rarely do so."—A. R. 812.

There may, then, among simple-hearted people, be conjunction with the Lord before there is any conscious or formal acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity, or before there is any thought as to "whether his Humanity be Divine or not." And no one can doubt that all in whom such conjunction takes place, are members of the true church of Christ, whatever be their doctrinal professions or their external Church relations.

And since there may be persons who are professedly or nominally in the rejection of this central doctrine of the New Jerusalem, and yet *at heart* are in the reception and acknowledgment of the doctrine, so on the other hand there may be those who openly profess and accept it, but who at heart deny and reject it. Members of the nominal New Church, if they do not shun evils as sins, nor live according to the divine precepts, do internally and really reject the doctrine of the Divine Humanity. Their worship of the Divine Human is the worship of a mere name—nothing more. It is, therefore, as truly idolatrous as was the worship of Je-

hovah among the Jews. And speaking of these latter, Swedenborg says:—

"If any worshiped Jehovah, it was only on account of his being *called* Jehovah, and thus being distinguished by *name* from the gods of other nations. Thus their worship even in this respect, was idolatrous: for the worship of a name alone, supposing it to be even the name of Jehovah, is nothing else but mere idolatry. The case is the same with those who call themselves Christians, and say they worship Christ, and yet *do not live according to his precepts.* All such persons worship Him with idolatrous worship, because they worship his name alone; for it is a false Christ whom they worship, concerning which, see Matt. xxiv. 23, 24, n. 3010."—A. C. 3732.

It is plain from this (and the thought is a solemn one) that the receivers of the doctrines of heaven, or members of the nominal New Church, may, while extolling the Divine Humanity with their lips, be offering to that Humanity only an idolatrous worship. It is certain that our worship *is* idolatrous, if we are not, from day to day, and hour to hour, striving to live according to the divine precepts.

It is not a mere name, then, or a mere profession of faith, that is to save or condemn us. We may bear the name of Newchurchmen, and profess the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, yet have our final abode in the realms below. Or we may name ourselves Unitarians or Trinitarians,

Protestants or Catholics, and profess the doctrines commonly held by these classes of Christians respectively, yet live so near the Lord, and listen so reverently to every whisper of the Spirit, and strive so diligently in all things to be led by Him and to do his will, that our ultimate dwelling-place shall be among the white-robed armies above. We may acknowledge and worship the Divine Humanity with our lips, yet deny and reject that Humanity in our hearts. Or, we may profess the doctrine commonly known as Unitarian, yet be in the life of heavenly charity—be *at heart* in the acknowledgment and worship of the Divine Humanity.

Here, again, we meet with the same genuine catholicism as the previous chapters of this work have disclosed;—a catholicism broad and inclusive as the kingdom of heaven, yet one that does not contradict or annul a single Bible precept, nor relax a single gospel requirement. It is, indeed, the very catholicism (neither more nor less) of the gospel of our Lord,—a gospel all ablaze throughout with the Divine wisdom, beneficence and mercy.

But let no one imagine from the foregoing remarks, that we set a light value on the doctrine of the Divine Humanity, or on the importance of its being clearly discerned, and intelligently and

consciously grasped. On the contrary, we hold it to be, what Swedenborg everywhere represents it as being, the central sun in the new theological system,—all the more to be prized, too, because multitudes who earnestly desire to know and do the Master's will, can receive and be blessed by its kindling beams without thinking or knowing whence they emanate. The full and open reception of this heavenly doctrine, is an unspeakable help toward the attainment of the heavenly life, if the receiver chooses so to make it; for it helps, as no other doctrine can, to unlock and throw wide open the doors of the soul to the reception of the Lord and his angels.

VIII.

SOME MAY DRINK DEADLY THINGS WITH IMPUNITY.

ALL spiritual falsities are deadly things, for their tendency is to deaden and destroy the soul's true life. They are all from hell. This, we presume, is the belief of most Christians, and it is often and explicitly taught in the writings of the New Church. Falsities also blind or darken the souls of their receivers. As truth is spiritual light, so falsity is spiritual darkness. And because all the denizens of hell are in falsities as well as in evils, therefore hell is described in the Word as a realm of darkness. The darkness of hell is spiritual darkness. And all on earth whose minds are imbued with falsities, are in this darkness, which varies exceedingly in degrees of intensity. As to their spirits, they are enveloped in the smoke of the abyss.

Accepting the truth of these general postulates, it is not difficult to prove that none but those who accept the heavenly truths revealed through Swedenborg, can be in a heavenly state, because not in heavenly light, and therefore not really and truly Christians. The argument may be briefly stated thus:—

1st. The Old Church (meaning all existing churches except the nominally New), is in great falsities. Instance the tripersonality of God, the vicarious atonement, justification by faith alone, the resurrection of the material body, etc.

2d. All who are in great falsities are in spiritual darkness, and interiorly, as to their spirits, must therefore be in association with the spirits of darkness—with those who inhabit the abyss.

3d. Therefore the Old Church (meaning as above) is in spiritual darkness, and cannot be really associated with spirits who inhabit the realms of light. Hence its members cannot, any of them, be recognized as belonging to the true Church of Christ.

This is a summary statement of the argument by which some persons persuade themselves and others, that there are no true followers of the Lord, no real Christians, outside of the communion known in our day as that of the New Christian Church. But this argument entirely ignores a large class of passages in Swedenborg, which, if allowed their proper weight, would at once expose the fallacy involved in it. It also assumes that all who belong to churches into whose creeds false doctrines have been incorporated, are necessarily *in* those falsities, and therefore in darkness,—an assumption that is wholly gratuitous.

The truth undoubtedly is, that there are at the

present day but few, comparatively, who are really *in* the falsities they profess. The belief of the great majority of Christians in certain false dogmas, is, no doubt, more formal than real. They profess these dogmas because they were born in the church that held and taught them, and because they early imbibed them from their parents and religious teachers. With the majority they are not falsities of evil, which we are told, are the only *real* falsities; but they are falsities of ignorance or of a misguided education. They are falsities which have been *taught* them, and *therefore* have been accepted, or rather, have been *assented to.*

But along with some great errors, it should ever be borne in mind that most Christians have received, through the medium of parents and religious books and teachers as well as from the literal sense of the Word, some great and valuable truths which have not failed to produce their legitimate fruits. Very few Christians of the present day have been taught *nothing but error.* Indeed we are quite safe in saying that more truth than error is taught in most if not *all* the churches. In all the churches the simple precepts of the Gospel, including the commandments of the Decalogue which comprehend the very essence of God's Word, are diligently taught; and through these, spite of the errors that are mingled with

them, many professing Christians have imbibed much of the genuine spirit of Christianity. And through the mighty power of Him from whom this spirit comes, the falsities which they have innocently received are so modified and softened that they can hardly be considered as falsities *with them.* They are not so viewed by the Lord or the angels. The Lord accepts their falsities for truths, in the degree that they strive to do his will; and thus these falsities become in some measure receptive of good. Grant that they are nothing but falsities as set forth in the creeds, and as received and held by those who are in evils of life. Still they are not altogether false as received and held by those who shun evils as sins: and these, doubtless, constitute the majority of believers. By this class of persons these falsities are so understood as to be in some measure allied to truth, and conducive to good. In the minds of the recipients, they are, as Swedenborg says, "bended to good;" or, at least the malevolence of the false is taken away, and they are rendered comparatively harmless. There is a heaven-wide distinction between the falsities of such persons, or the falsities of ignorance and education, and the falsities that originate in evil lusts. Concerning the former Swedenborg says:—

"Falsities originating in ignorance are either a consequence of wrong instruction from infancy, or

of a man's various engagements in worldly business, whereby he has been hindered from inquiring into the truth of the opinions he may have imbibed; or they may proceed from weakness of judgment, rendering him incapable of discerning between truth and falsity. Falsities of this kind are not attended with much hurt, provided a man does not confirm them by much reasoning and argument, and so persuade himself, under the influence of some evil lust, to favor and countenance them. . . . But the case is otherwise with falsities originating in evil lusts, such as self-love and the love of the world."—A. C. 1295.

Again, speaking of falsities with those who are in the good of life, Swedenborg tells us that they are *not* falsities when they are viewed interiorly; nor do they appear to the angels as falsities, "but as a species of truth:"—

"The falsities which are not from evil, in the external form indeed are falsities, but not in the internal; for there are falsities with those who are in the good of life, but interiorly in those falsities there is good, which causes the evil of the false to be removed; hence that false before the angels *does not appear as the false, but as a species of truth;* for the angels look at the interior things of faith, and not at its exterior."—Ibid. 10,648.

Of similar purport is the passage (A. C. 9809) where this illumined writer, speaking of those entertaining falsities "who are in the sense of the letter of the Word, and remain in the doctrine thence, and still have the good of life for an end,"

says: "for this good as an end drives away all the malevolence of the false, and by application forms it into some resemblance of the truth."

And not only does the false, with those who have the good of life as an end, appear to the angels as *not* false, "but as a species of truth," but we are repeatedly told that this false is actually accepted of the Lord as truth, and is so regarded by the angels. The following are a few of the passages in point:—

"It is said the false from evil, because this false is truly the false; whereas, the false not from evil, but from ignorance of the truth, is not such. Evil is that which is opposite to heaven, but not the false from ignorance; yea, if in ignorance there be anything of innocence, then, *that false is accepted of the Lord as truth;* for they who are in such, receive the truth."—A. C. 6784.

"With respect to good, the case is this: Goods are infinite in variety, and they have their quality from truths; hence the good becomes such as the truths are which enter; the truths which enter are seldom genuine, but are appearances of truth, and also are falsities, but still not opposite to truths; nevertheless, when these flow-in into good, which is the case when the life is formed according to them from ignorance, in which ignorance there is innocence; and when the end is to do good, in this case they are regarded by the Lord and in heaven *not as falsities,* but as bearing a resemblance to truth, and according to the quality of innocence *are accepted as truths.*"—Ibid. 7887.

"There are falsities *which are received as truths* when good is in them, especially the good of innocence, as among the Gentiles, and also among several within the Church [where the Word is]."—A. C. 4736.

"Falsities with those who are in evil are falsities of evil, and truths with them are truths falsified, which are dead. But falsities with those who are in good, *are accepted as truths;* for they receive mildness from good, and are applied to good uses."—Ibid. 10,109.

"Moreover, there are truths which are only appearances of truths, such as those of the literal sense of the Word, which are also *accepted of the Lord as genuine truths* when there is in them the good of love to the Lord, and of love toward the neighbor, or charity."—A. E. 625.

Now, in view of passages like the foregoing, what becomes of that severe logic—so prevalent among some, and by them deemed so conclusive—whereby it is proved that all who believe, or profess to believe, certain popular religious errors, are necessarily without the pale of the Christian Church, and internally associated with the spirits of darkness? We are safe in saying that it is not such logic as Swedenborg himself would have indorsed. For he saw that, with multitudes of these people—with all, indeed, who shun evils as sins, and strive to live a righteous life—the falsities they profess are *not* falsities with them; that they

appear to the angels as "a species of truths," and are accepted of the Lord as truths.

And if the Lord and his angels do not reject those who are in the good of life, because of the false doctrines they profess, why should we? If the falsities professed by such people are disregarded in heaven, or are looked upon there not as falsities but as a species of truths, then how ought they to be looked upon by those on earth who accept the doctrines of heaven?

It is impossible to read these extracts from Swedenborg, without admiring the unspeakable wisdom and mercy of the Lord, and the grand and genuine catholicism of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem, of which he was the divinely-commissioned herald.

IX.

TRUTH NOT TRUTH WITH ALL ITS RECEIVERS.

IT has been shown in the foregoing chapters, that the divinely authorized writings of the New Church abound in passages which assure us that people may *believe* many and great falsities, yet *live* such pure and righteous lives that they are internally associated with the angels of heaven. No observing and thoughtful person can doubt that there are multitudes of such people in the various Christian denominations of to-day. And all such, whatever be their external church relations, do internally and *really*, though not *nominally*, belong to the Church of the New Jerusalem, notwithstanding Swedenborg says that, in it "there will not be any falsity of faith." In reality these people *are not in* falsities of faith. The falsities which they *profess*, not being falsities of evil, are *not* falsities with them. They do not enter into their life. They are by no means in agreement with the good of charity in which they are principled. They are not really loved but repudiated by them internally. They are only in the memory, or outermost court of the mind. Therefore these people are not really *in* the falsi-

ties they profess, and which they therefore *seem* to be in, because the falsities are not really *in them*, not being in their will principle or in their hearts. Internally or *at heart* they are in the truth; for only the truth is in agreement with the good of charity in which they are principled. They *have* the truth, and in the only sure way, too, that a man *can* have it. They have it *in the life*. They have it written upon their hearts.

It would be easy to quote many pages from Swedenborg in confirmation of what is here affirmed. Let a few brief extracts suffice.

"It is a canon that the truths appertaining to those who are in evils of life, are falsified [that is, are *falsities* with them], and the falsities appertaining to those who are in good of life, are verified [that is, are *truths* with them]. The reason why falsities are verified with these latter is, that they are applied to agree with good, thus the erroneous or harsh things [*ruditates*] of the falsities themselves are wiped away."—A. C. 8149.

"The false as the false is not appropriated to him who is in good, because he thinks well of God, of God's kingdom, and of spiritual life, and hence applies the false so that it may not be against these things, but may in some manner agree with them; thus he softens it, and its asperity and hardness do not come into the idea. Unless this were so, scarcely any one could be saved, for falsities are more prevalent than truths. But it is to be noted that they who are in good are also in the love of truth; therefore in the

other life, when they are instructed by the angels, they reject falsities and accept truths."—A. C. 8051.

"Good of life is to be regarded in the first place, that is, primarily; for in proportion as a man is in goods of life, in the same proportion he is *really* in truths of doctrine, and not *vice versâ*. The reason is, that goods of life open the interiors of the mind; and these being opened, truths appear in their own light, whence they are not only understood, but also loved. Not so when doctrinals are regarded in the first place, that is, primarily; in this case truths may indeed be known, but not seen interiorly, nor loved from spiritual affection." —A. R. 82.

"He who lives in charity toward the neighbor, though he may not be in the truth *as to doctrine*, still he is in the truth *as to life;* consequently there is in him the Lord's church or kingdom."—A. C. 3451.

"Conjunction with the Lord or with the internals of the Word, takes place even with some who hold faith to be the essential of salvation, but only with those who are *principled in good;* that is, with those who, although they make faith essential as to doctrine, still make charity essential as to life."—Ibid.

"Whosoever has the life of charity, knows [internally] all the things appertaining to faith. . . . They who live according to a conscience of what is right, are, from charity alone, acquainted [internally] with the things composing points of doctrine. Such persons, also—in cases where they do

not so well understand and are not able to determine what is right and true, yet believe in simplicity, or out of a simple heart, that it is so because the Lord has said it—do not incur guilt, although what they believe be not true in itself."—A. C. 1798.

"The falsities which are not from evil are falsities, indeed, in the external form, but not in the internal. For there are falsities with those who are in the good of life; but interiorly in those falsities [or in their recipients] there is good which causes the evil of the false to be removed; hence that false does not appear to the angels as the false, but as a species of truth."—Ibid. 10,648.

It is plain from these extracts, that, according to the divinely authorized teachings of the New Church, a man may be externally and apparently in great falsities, while internally and really he may be *in the truth.* He may be in great heresies by *profession*—by his *creed*—by what appears *externally*—and at the same time be really a member of the church of the New Jerusalem, although we are told that in this church "there will not be any falsity of faith." If he is in the good of life, though his head may be in heresies, his heart is not. *Internally* he is in the truth.

"Well, if this be so," the reader will say, "if some who are externally in falsities of doctrine may yet be internally in the truth, and therefore really though not nominally in the church of the New Jerusalem, then why may not some who are

externally and professedly in the truths of the New Jerusalem, be internally in falsities, and therefore really without the walls of the Holy City, though nominally within? If the falsities which a man believes do not necessarily determine his spiritual *status*, or prove him to be outside the pale of the true church, then why should the truths he believes prove him to be within its pale? And why, in that case, may not some professed or nominal Newchurchmen be *really* outside of this church?"

Why not, indeed? We not only admit the justness of the inference implied in these interrogatories, but we cannot doubt that such is the fact. We doubt not but there are some nominal Newchurchmen—some who understand and accept the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, who are internally and really far removed from this Church. Why should it not be so? since *doctrine*, however pure and heavenly, does not constitute the Church. If people may believe false doctrines, and still live near to God and heaven, why may they not believe true doctrines, and yet live far from both? And if the former are within, then the latter must be *without*, the pale of the true Church, though the doctrines they profess be the very doctrines of heaven, And this fair and logical inference is abundantly sustained by the teachings of the illumined Swede. The following are a few passages in point:—

"There are, indeed, in the Church several who *say* that charity is the essential of the Church, and not faith separate; but to say it and believe it, and not to *live the life* of charity, is only to *say* that it is, and not to *make* it the essential; therefore they are in the same situation as those who say that faith is the essential; for with them charity is of faith alone, and not of the life [that is to say, such persons are really in faith alone, though they profess a different doctrine.]"—A. E. 107.

"Truths are not given without good, for truths derive their life from good. The truths belonging to a man who is not principled in good, are indeed truths in themselves, but they are *not truths in him.*"—Ibid. 48.

"They who are in evil as to life, are [internally and really] in the false as to doctrine. It may, indeed, seem otherwise to themselves, who are in evil of life; for when they make a lip-profession of truths from the Word, or from the doctrinals of their church, they suppose that they are *in the belief* of those truths. It appears also to them as if they were; but still *they are not if the life be evil*. . . . Falsities agreeing with the evil of lusts have place *interiorly* with those who live wickedly [whatever truths they may believe or profess]."—A. C. 7577.

"That truths which in themselves are truths, with one person are more true, with another less true, with some altogether untrue, yea, false, may appear from almost all those things which in themselves are true, since they are with every man according to his affections." (Ibid. 2439.) "Truth

with man is altogether according to the principle of *good* which appertains to him."—A. C. 2429.

"Truths appertaining to those who are in evil of life, so far as relates to themselves, are *not* truths; for by application to evil, which is of the life, they put off the essence of truth, and put on the nature of the false."—Ibid. 8149.

"It is manifest that the truths of faith cannot be acknowledged as truths, that is, the acknowledgment so much talked of cannot exist, except *outwardly* and *in words only*, unless they are implanted in charity; otherwise, inwardly and *in heart* they are denied."—Ibid. 2049.

Swedenborg further tells us that "the church is never predicated of the intellect, but *invariably of the will*—having its ground *solely* in love and charity." (A. C. 809.) And, as if to warn those who should read and accept the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, of the danger to which they would be exposed on account of their *knowing* so much and so exalted truth, he says, that "many of those who *know what is true*, are in hell." (Ibid. 896.) If this be so, then the abundant knowledges of heavenly truth possessed by us, is no sure evidence that we are nearer the mansions of the blessed, than many others who are destitute of these knowledges. If our inner life—our governing principles of action—our heart's affections—be in accordance with the doctrines of heaven we profess, then these truths are truths with us; otherwise they are

falsities; for "truths are with every man according to his affections."

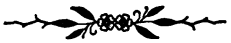
We might multiply, indefinitely, extracts of the character of those above cited. But it is needless to add more by way of confirming the general postulate, that a man is really in the Kingdom or out of it—*in* truth or *in* falsity—according as he is internally in good or evil, and not according to his belief or profession of true or false doctrine, nor according to his external church relations. Nothing is taught us more plainly in the heavenly doctrines, than this: that a man may make a profession of the truth, yet not be *really* in the reception of the truth: that he may belong to that outward and visible body of people whom men *call* the Church—and who are the visible and nominal Church—yet *not* belong to the invisible, true, and real Church of Christ—the New Jerusalem.

And so, too, it is equally plain from the same heavenly doctrines, that a person may be in the outward acknowledgment or profession of great falsities, and yet not be really *in* those falsities; and he may be externally connected with a visible body of people who are in the same falsities, and therefore supposed by some to be a false church or *no* church—supposed to be forsaken of the Lord, and spiritually dead—and yet he may internally and really belong to the true and invisible Church of Christ;—may, in reality, be much nearer to the

New Jerusalem, than some who understand and accept all the doctrines of heaven.

Few things are more plainly taught in the heavenly doctrines than this: yet it seems to have been strangely overlooked by not a few of the receivers of these doctrines. And until the truth on this subject comes to be generally seen and acknowledged, we are likely to continue in the beaten track of the previous churches, who have separated from each other solely on the ground of a difference in doctrinals.

But the herald of the New Jerusalem assures us, in language clear and explicit, that "*doctrinals* do not serve to distinguish churches before the Lord;" therefore we should not allow the external reception and acknowledgment of doctrinals of either one sort or another, to distinguish persons as *in* or *out* of the Lord's true church. For in so doing, it is clear that we are not exemplifying the heavenly spirit nor the catholic teachings of the New Jerusalem.



X.

THE GENTILES.

WE mean by the Gentiles what is generally understood by this term, viz.: all peoples who do not acknowledge the divine inspiration and authority of the Old or New Testament Scriptures, and are, therefore, not to be reckoned as Jews or Christians. They are the entire Mahometan, Heathen, and Pagan world—embracing about three-fourths of the present population of our globe. What is to be the condition of this immense multitude of human beings in the great Hereafter, has been and continues to be a question of deep interest among Christians. They have not the "sure word of prophecy." God has not spoken to them as He has to us, through inspired Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists. They have no knowledge of "God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." They know nothing of the Incarnate Word; nothing of the advent, doings, sufferings, death and resurrection of the divine Saviour. They are ignorant of the grand and inspiring facts of the Gospel; ignorant of the nature and character—many of them even of the name—of Jesus Christ;

and, of course, are ignorant of the great redemption wrought by Him.

It is not strange, therefore, that this question should force itself upon all thoughtful minds:—What is to be the fate of these people in the day of final adjudication? They are passing into the spiritual world by thousands every day. What is to be their final doom? Will the great Judge pronounce upon all of them the terrible sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"? Must this innumerable host all have their abode forever in the realms of darkness? If not, what *is* to become of them? How does the Church which claims to hold and teach the true Catholicism, answer this question? We shall see presently.

The prevalent belief in the Christian Church has been, that the people we call Gentiles, unless converted to the Christian religion, must all be lost. This belief has resulted legitimately from the commonly accepted theory in regard to the nature and way of salvation. According to this theory, men are justified and saved by faith alone—faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, and in the great Atonement wrought through Him. And as none can be supposed to have this faith who have never received the Gospel, and never heard of the divine Saviour or the way of salvation through Him, therefore, it is argued, all who have not the Gospel of

Jesus Christ, must inevitably perish. And in this conclusion many have confirmed themselves from the literal sense of such passages of Scripture as represent the Lord as "sore displeased with the heathen;" as purposing to "execute fury upon the heathen;" to "pour out his wrath" upon them; to "have all the heathen in derision," etc.

And in permitting this opinion—mistaken though it be—to prevail as extensively as it has in the Christian church, we recognize the hand of a wise and merciful Providence. For what else but a firm belief in the spiritually lost condition of the whole heathen world, could have inspired Christians with such zeal in the cause of foreign missions? What else could have so awakened and sustained among them the missionary spirit? What else could have drawn from their pockets such vast sums as have been expended in missionary enterprises? What else could have enkindled that spirit of self-sacrifice which thousands of devoted missionaries have displayed, and which has led them to take their lives in their hands, bid adieu to kindred and home and friends, and cast aside or imperil all that the world most prizes, for the privilege of proclaiming "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" among the heathen? What else could have led to such a wide dissemination of the Gospel among pagan nations, or so stimulated the translation of the Bible into all the languages of

the earth? The faith of the nominal New Church, had it been the prevailing faith of Christendom for the last hundred years, would hardly have achieved such results.

It may be said that the fruits of these missionary enterprises have hitherto been meagre—hardly adequate to the vast amount of labor and money expended. But even if this were so (which we do not admit), it would by no means follow that a really great work has not been achieved—a work pregnant with stupendous results to be seen in the coming centuries. The seeds of divine truth scattered in heathen lands—the Word of God translated into the various languages of the earth, so that every one can read it in his own vernacular—who can foresee the abundant harvest which will spring from these seeds in future ages? Who knows what a lofty and noble Christian civilization may yet be reared upon the foundations which these patient and devoted servants of Christ have been laying for the last hundred years?

Yet the thought is unutterably shocking, that all in heathen lands who receive not the Gospel, must perish everlastingly. And it is unreasonable as it is shocking. It is wholly inconsistent with the wisdom and love of God, to suppose that He would permit such myriads of human beings to be born under circumstances which render their salvation utterly impossible. A wise and good Being

could never condemn any one to endless darkness and woe, for that which is no fault, and therefore no sin, of his own. It is no fault of the millions in heathen lands that they have not the Gospel. And will God punish, for not *believing* the Gospel, those to whom the Gospel has never been presented?—those who have never enjoyed the opportunity of hearing or reading the Gospel? Will He forever exclude them from the light of his countenance and the joys of heaven? *Can* He punish one of his creatures for that which is not the creature's fault? Can He punish, for not obeying the truths of Christianity, those who never knew these truths? Certainly not. In dealing with his creatures, God can never act contrary to the principles of eternal love and justice; for to do so, would be to act contrary to his very nature. There can be no moral guilt without moral transgression. And moral transgression is a conscious and deliberate violation of known moral law. But where there is no law, or where the law is unknown, there can be no transgression. Such is the clear testimony of enlightened reason.

And the testimony of Scripture is perfectly accordant with that of reason. For we are assured that some—yes, "a great multitude" of "all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues,"—have already been admitted to the joys of heaven. The inspired writer of the Apocalypse bears witness to

this fact. For, after recounting the number of those sealed out of each of the tribes of Israel, he adds: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." The apostle Peter, also, after he had been favored with anin structive vision, and after being called upon to declare what things God had commanded him, began by saying: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but *in every nation* he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." From this it appears plain that there are *some* in every nation, who fear God and work righteousness. And all such are accepted of Him. Therefore the seer of Patmos saw a great multitude of all nations and peoples and tongues, standing before the Throne, and clad in the vestments of heaven.

Then, as a matter of fact, we find some form of religion and worship among all nations, and some specific duties which their religion enjoins. And all the oriental nations have their Sacred Books in which are found many excellent precepts and wise maxims. Among the Mahometans is the Koran; among the Hindus, the Vedas; among the Persians, the Zend-Avesta; and among the Chinese, the writings of Confucius. In the Koran

are incorporated many of the benignant precepts of our Saviour. Frequent alms-giving is enjoined as an imperative duty; and such inculcations as the following are scattered throughout its pages:—

"Do unto another, as thou wouldst he should do unto thee."—"Deal not unjustly with others, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly."—"He who sells a defective thing, concealing its defect, will provoke the anger of God and the curses of the angels."—"Take not advantage of the necessities of another to buy things at a sacrifice; rather relieve his indigence."—"Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captive if confined unjustly."—"Look not scornfully upon thy fellow-man, neither walk the earth with insolence; for God loveth not the arrogant and vainglorious."

In the Vedas of the Hindus are found such sentiments and inculcations as these:—

"By one Supreme Ruler is this universe pervaded."—"God who is perfect wisdom and perfect happiness, is the final refuge of the man who has liberally bestowed his wealth, who has been firm in virtue, and who knows and adores the Great One."—"Preserve thyself from self-sufficiency, and do not covet property belonging to another."—"The way to eternal beatitude is open to him who, without omission, speaketh truth."—"If any one assumes the garb of the religious, without doing their works, he is not of the religious. Whatever garments he wears, if his works are pure, he belongs to the order of pure men."—"No man can acquire knowledge of the soul, without abstaining from evil acts and having control over

the senses. . . But man may obtain knowledge of the soul by contemplation of God."—"To those regions where evil spirits dwell, and which utter darkness involves, surely go after death all such men as destroy the purity of their own souls."

And among the precepts of Confucius, whose writings form the Sacred Books of the Chinese, are found such as the following:—

"Not to correct our faults is to commit new ones."—"Be rigid to yourself, and gentle to others."—"Fix the thoughts on the duty, practice without ceasing the virtue of humanity, and, if you have leisure, cultivate the arts."—"He who knows right principles is not equal to him who loves them; nor is he who loves them equal to him who delights in them."—"To know that a thing is right and not to do it, is a weakness."—"Teach all, without regard to what class they belong."

When one of his disciples begged that he would teach him how to die well, Confucius answered: "You have not yet learned to live well; when you have learned that, you will know how to die well." When on another occasion he was asked what one maxim expressed the conduct proper for a whole life, he replied: "Never do to others what you do not wish them to do to you." And, in one of the Five Volumes called Chu King, there occur such passages as the following:—

"The Sovereign Lord of Heaven produced all the nations of the world, and reigns over them. He makes no exception of persons, but esteems

virtue alone, loving men only so far as they worship Him sincerely. He hears the prayers of the merciful, but He destroys the wicked. We ought to pray to Him for immortal life."

"Perfection consists in being reunited to the Supreme Unity. The soul was at first luminous, but it was afterwards obscured. It should be our earnest endeavor to restore it to its primitive light; and it is only by destroying all wrong desires, and all self-love, that we can perceive celestial reason. What is called reason is properly an attribute of Tien, the Supreme God. The light which He communicates to men is a participation of this reason. What is called reason in Tien, is virtue in man; and when reduced to practice, is called justice."

"When thou art in the secret places of thy house, do not say, None sees me; for there is an Intelligent Spirit who sees all. Tien, the Supreme, pierces into the recesses of the heart, as light penetrates into a dark room. We must endeavor to be in harmony with his light, like a musical instrument perfectly attuned. We must receive from his hand as soon as he opens it. He seeks to enlighten us continually; but by our disorderly passions we close the entrance to our souls."

"To think that we have virtue, is to have very little of it. Wisdom consists in being very humble as if we were incapable of anything, yet ardent as if we could do all."

And with such high wisdom do the volumes which contain the recorded sayings of Confucius, abound. And these Books, regarded as sacred by the Chinese, are the standard literature of the

whole empire—the basis of all their moral and political wisdom. From time immemorial they have been read and studied, and large portions of them have been committed to memory by every schoolboy of that vast country; and to call in question anything they assert, would be deemed an alarming heresy.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose that the people who hold in reverence such works as the Koran, the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, or the books of Confucius—who regard them as sacred, and consider it a religious obligation to obey their teachings—will all perish everlastingly because they have not the gospel of Jesus Christ? Is this an enlightened, reasonable or really Christian view of the subject? Is it not far more reasonable to believe that the books which they regard as sacred, have been mercifully provided of the Lord as a means of their salvation? And if they live according to the truth which these books contain, and which they accept, why should they not go to heaven? By such a life, heaven will surely be opened within them, and its love, joy and peace will be experienced. They may not—doubtless will not—go to the *same* heaven as Christians; but may they not have a heaven of their own, just as they now have a country of their own, a government of their own, and a religion of their own different from that of Christians?

Swedenborg assures us that the Lord has mer-

cifully provided a medium of salvation for all peoples and nations, and thereby rendered it possible for all to be finally brought into a heavenly state, and therefore into some heavenly society. He says:—

"Since every one of every religion is acquainted with the evils and from evils with the falsities which ought to be shunned, and while he shuns them is acquainted with the goods which ought to be done, and with the truths which ought to be believed, it is evident that this is provided of the Lord as a universal medium of salvation with every nation which has any religion. This is given with all fullness among Christians; and it is likewise given, although not in fullness, among Mahometans, and also among Gentiles."—A. E. 1180.

"It is a very common thing with those who have conceived an opinion respecting any truth of faith, to judge of others that they cannot be saved but by believing as they do, which nevertheless the Lord forbids. (Matt. vii. 1, 2.) Accordingly it has been made known to me by much experience, that persons of every religion are saved, if so be, by a life of charity, they have received remains of good and of apparent truth." And "more are saved from among Gentiles than from among Christians; for such of the Gentiles as have thought well of their neighbor, and lived in good will to him, receive the truths of faith in another life better than they who are called Christians, and acknowledge the Lord more gladly than Christians do; for nothing is more delightful and happy

to the angels than to instruct those who come from the earth into the other life."—A. C. 2284.

Again: after telling us that every man, "whatsoever be his religion," may be saved, because every one is acquainted with evils that are to be shunned, and with goods that ought to be done, he adds:—

"A Mahometan sees from the Alkoran that God is one, that the Lord is the Son of God, that there is a heaven and a hell, that there is a life after death, and that the evils mentioned in the precepts of the Decalogue ought to be shunned; if he does these things, he also believes them, and is saved. A Gentile sees from his religious principle that there is a God, that He is to be sanctified and worshiped, that good is from Him, that there is a heaven and a hell, that there is a life after death, and that the evils mentioned in the Decalogue ought to be shunned: if he does these things, and believes them, he is saved. And since several of the Gentiles perceive God as a man, and God-man is the Lord, therefore also after death, when they are instructed by the angels, they acknowledge the Lord, and afterwards receive truths from Him which they did not know before."—A. E. 1180.

"Among the Gentiles who are out of the Church [that is, out of Christendom], there is likewise a church of the Lord; and although they are in false principles, still such as live a life of charity are saved."—A. C. 3093. See also 4190, 4211, 1032, 2589, 2863.

Such is the abounding love and mercy of the

Lord. And such, too, is the rational, Scriptural, and eminently catholic teaching of the New Christian Church concerning the Gentile world. Herein is revealed the benignity of our Father in the heavens, and his tender love and gracious care for all his children. And, although the Gentiles have not the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the great redemption wrought by Him, that has been vouchsafed to Christians, nevertheless it is He and He alone who enlightens their understanding and imparts to them whatever of saving health and joy and peace their souls receive. So that even those in Gentile nations, who are saved, are saved by Jesus Christ—by the Lord in his Divine Humanity; and without Him their condition would be as helpless and hopeless as our own.

XI.

UNITY WITH DIVERSITY.

ONE of the pregnant and far-reaching truths revealed through Swedenborg, and one of which the great practical value is not readily seen, and which only a few have yet come to recognize, is, that the angelic heaven is a thoroughly human organization and in the human form; and that the whole heaven of angels actually appears before the Lord as one man. Hence he often calls the entire angelic heavens the Grand Man—*Maximus Homo.* But when he tells us that heaven is in the human form, his meaning is, that it is in true human order; the word *form* being used by him in the sense in which we use it when speaking of civil, social or ecclesiastical affairs. He means that the innumerable societies of which heaven consists, are so arranged and adjusted as to express in the most perfect manner possible the truly human principles which constitute the very essence of heaven. In other words, that the connection, mutual dependence and intercommunication of the societies composing the angelic heavens, and the uses they respectively perform, correspond to

those existing among the various members and organs of the human body and their respective uses. One is a perfect representative image of the other.

Human life is the noblest and most exalted kind of life. Human wants are more numerous, and the human faculties are higher, more enlarged and varied than those of any other creature. Therefore the human form, through whose instrumentality alone these faculties can manifest themselves, is the perfection of all forms. God Himself who is the perfection of all that is human, is in this form. He is a perfect Divine Man. In Him everything truly human exists in infinite fullness, variety and perfection. Therefore when He manifested Himself on earth to the eye of sense, He appeared in the human form. And when in more ancient times He filled the body of an angel with his divine life, and thus became manifest to the spiritual senses of his chosen seers as "the angel of Jehovah," his form was always the human.

And it is a divinely-revealed truth, that God created man in his own image. Man's form, therefore, is one capable of receiving and expressing, in a finite degree, something of that truly human life which flows from the Divine-Human. This life when received, becomes in man the life of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor. And this is the essential life of heaven. Other

creatures below man receive and enjoy lower degrees of life; but he alone is able to receive and enjoy this higher or heavenly life, because he alone is in the human form. And the more we receive of this life, the more truly human do we become in our thoughts, feelings, dispositions and purposes; and the more faithfully do we express through our human form—by our looks, words and actions—the love and wisdom which are the essential constituents of true humanity. For the most beautiful and perfect human form is that which best expresses the purest and most exalted human love in union with the highest wisdom.

And as it is with a single individual, so with a society or community—so with men in the aggregate. The more of true human life each member of a community receives, or the more each one suffers himself to be governed by the highest good and truth, the more orderly, industrious, united, healthy and happy is that community. The more truly human is it in its form—in its organization, its plans and its activities. It appoints its wisest and best men to preside over its interests, because every one is aiming to subject himself to the government of the highest good and truth. Thus the form or order of that community becomes more and more human. All its corporate acts express more and more faithfully the human thoughts and feelings with which the minds of its individual

members are imbued. Such community, therefore, is in the human form, just so far as the individual minds composing it are truly human. It is the tendency of true human life wherever it exists, to mould the collective as well as the individual man into a corresponding human form.

Now, it is well known that the human body is the most complex structure in all God's universe. There is no other created thing which consists of so many parts; yet no two of these are found precisely alike. Some of them differ widely both in form and function. But notwithstanding the endless number and diversity of parts, they are all mutually dependent, mutually adapted to each other's wants, and work together in admirable harmony. Every organ however minute, has its post assigned and its appropriate work given it to do. The brain, heart, liver, pleura, lungs, pancreas and abdominal viscera—how different are these from each other in their form and structure! How different also in their functions, or in the work given them to do! Yet how admirably do they all harmonize! What entire agreement between these diverse parts! What complete unity, and perfect concert of action!—a unity all the more perfect because of their great diversity. With what beautiful brotherly love do they all work together, and what tender regard has each for the welfare of the rest! If one is out of order,

all the others are more or less uncomfortable and restless. If one suffers, all the rest sympathize and suffer with it. It is a law—and herein we have a good illustration of the universal law of brotherhood—that each shall discharge its appropriate function, not apart from the others and for the sake of itself alone, but in harmony with, and for the welfare of, all the rest. And the more faithfully it labors to do this, the more does it promote its own health and strength, as well as the health and strength of the other members. The welfare of each is linked indissolubly with that of all the others.

But although one life pervades all the bodily organs, they do not all receive it alike. Their receptivity is as various as their forms. Some receive it in a higher degree than others, and perform more important and varied functions, and may therefore be said to be of a higher grade. And so there are gradations of rank among the members of the body. No one is entirely independent of the rest. No one is so high that it can dispense with the services of the most humble, and no one so low that it cannot do something to promote the health and strength of the highest. The head needs the foot, and the heart the hand, no less than the foot needs the head or the hand the heart. And even the hair and nails and the coarse cuticle on the soles of the feet have their use, and

add to the beauty, completeness and perfection of the whole.

Here, then, in the human body we have a representative image of heaven;—the most perfect image of order, harmony, unity, mutual dependence and brotherly love. The relation of the bodily organs to each other, and the uses they respectively perform, are as the relation existing among the angelic societies, and their respective uses; because heaven as a whole and in each of its parts, is in the human form.

Now, all Christians, we presume, will agree that the church on earth ought to be, and so far as it is a true and living church *will* be, an image of heaven. It will be a unit consisting of a great number of different parts, like the human body. This is what Paul believed and taught. He held that the Church of Christ is human in its form, consisting of a great variety of parts that are as diverse in form and function as are the different parts of the human body—yet together forming one church. In one of his letters to the brethren at Rome, he says: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ." (Rom. xii. 4, 5.) Again, in a letter to the Corinthian Church: "For the body is not one member, but many; and ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." He further says there is

no schism among the bodily members, and therefore there ought not to be any in the body of Christ; that the various members of this body (the church) "should have the same care one for another."

When Christians generally come to accept this new doctrine concerning the human form of heaven —the doctrine of endless diversity coupled with perfect unity—they will rejoice more at variety than at uniformity in things pertaining to the church. They will see that perfect agreement in doctrine (save in two or three fundamentals) or in ritual, is neither to be expected nor desired; that variety everywhere—in the spiritual no less than in the natural realm—is the truly divine order. And seeing this, they will allow and encourage the utmost freedom of thought and inquiry on all religious questions, not deprecating but cordially welcoming whatever diversity may result from such freedom. Prejudice against new ideas, or against writings which contain them, will everywhere be frowned upon as a hindrance to religious progress.

Thus will bigotry and intolerance be banished from the churches, and in their place will come a grand catholicism, broad and beautiful as that in heaven. Instead of antagonistic sects, warring against and weakening each other, we should have, out of many and diverse communions, one har-

monious and united Church; not one in doctrine, discipline and ritual, but one in spirit,—one in the practical acknowledgment of the Lord and fidelity to the precepts of his Word; a Church all the more beautiful and perfect because of the endless diversity among its component parts.

Multitudes of Christians are expecting, and are even now longing and praying for, such a Church. They know it is prophesied of in the Scriptures. It is what is meant by the New Jerusalem which the seer of Patmos beheld in vision "coming down from God out of heaven." The things said of this city (Rev. xxi.)—its shape, dimensions, foundations, walls, gates, etc.—interpreted by the revealed rule of correspondence, all prove it to be the very Church that so many devout minds are earnestly looking and longing for;—the very Church that Swedenborg has told us of, and the doctrines and general character of which he has so clearly revealed;—the Church which he assures us is to be "the crown of all the churches that have hitherto been in the world"—the beautiful consummate flower toward the expansion of which all previous churches have looked, and for which each has in some measure prepared the way. And if what he tells us be true, we should expect this Church to furnish an illustration of the heavenly doctrine we have here been considering. We should expect it would be something like the heaven of

angels, consisting of parts as diverse as the various organs and members of the human body, and, by virtue of the Lord's own life in the souls of each and all, as thoroughly united. We should expect in it great freedom of thought (for intellectual, moral and spiritual progress demands this), along with a wide diversity in doctrinal beliefs and states of life; and should look for complete agreement in only two or three fundamentals, and this in substance rather than in form (see A. C. 1834). And we should expect in the authorized teachings of this Church a distinct recognition of this wide diversity, and of the large toleration and complete union and harmony thence resulting.

And turning to these teachings as given in the revelations made through Swedenborg for the use of the church signified by the New Jerusalem, we find such expectation fully justified. First, we are told that the church on earth should be like the church in heaven in respect to variety.

"Heaven is a whole, composed of various parts arranged in the most perfect form; for the heavenly form is the most perfect of all forms. All perfection results from the harmonious arrangement of parts that are different. . . .

"The same may be said of the church as of heaven, for the church is the Lord's heaven upon earth. There are also many churches [or ecclesiastical organizations]; and yet each one is called a church, and likewise is a church so far as the

good of love and faith rules therein. There also the Lord makes a whole from parts that are different; that is, from several churches He makes one church."—H. H., nos. 56, 57.

The church here spoken of, and which is perfected by variety, is clearly the Lord's true church; for it is said to be the same as the heaven of angels in respect to the diversity of its component parts. This could be affirmed of none other than a true church.

But the endless variety in the church signified by the New Jerusalem, is distinctly declared by Swedenborg in other parts of his writings. Thus in his explanation of the meaning of "the seven candlesticks" mentioned in the Apocalypse (ch. i.), he first says that they "signify the New Church upon earth, which is the New Jerusalem descending from the Lord out of the new heaven." Then, after referring to previous numbers where he had explained the meaning of "candlesticks" and the number "seven," he proceeds:—

"By the seven candlesticks are not meant seven churches, but the whole church in the aggregate, which in itself is one, but various according to reception. These varieties may be compared to the various jewels in a king's crown; also to the various members and organs in a perfect body, which yet make a one. The perfection of every form consists in diverse things being suitably disposed in their order. Hence it is that the

entire New Church is described, as to its various particulars, in what follows."—A. R. n. 66.

Here we are plainly taught that there will be great variety in the church signified by the New Jerusalem, and that this variety will not detract from, but rather add to, its perfection. It will be a truer and more excellent church, because more like the angelic heaven from which it descends, on account of such variety. We are further taught that this New Church "in the aggregate" is described as to its various particulars in what is said of "the seven churches in Asia."

Looking, now, at the faith of these "seven churches" as revealed in the spiritual sense of what is addressed to them, we find all the dominant forms of religious error current in the creeds of Christendom at the time Swedenborg wrote We find among them some "who primarily respect truths of doctrine and not the good of life;" some "who are in good as to life, but in falsities as to doctrine;" some "who place the whole of the Church in good works, and nothing of it in truths of doctrine;" some "who have suffered themselves to be seduced by others"—who "have not themselves falsified truths," but have given credit to others "who have done so;" some "who are in dead worship;" and some "who are in faith separate from charity." (See A. E. 112, 163, 195, 227.) Yet, notwithstanding the errors incorpo-

rated into their creeds and professed by the people, many in these same churches are said to live the life of charity, and are therefore really members of the Lord's true church—the New Jerusalem. Thus it is said of those professing the doctrine of "salvation by faith alone," that "the greater part of those born within the churches where this doctrine is received. . . . believe no otherwise than that 'faith alone' is to think about God and salvation, and how they ought to live;" and that "there are very few who thus live from doctrine" —that is, who live in accordance with the doctrine of faith alone as set down in the creeds.

Then in the chapter of the Revelation (xxi.) which contains the fullest account of the New Jerusalem, we are told who are excluded from its sacred enclosure, and who are acknowledged as entitled to the privileges of citizenship. The former are all who have, by disorderly and wicked lives, "adulterated the goods and falsified the truths of the Word," and thus rendered their souls impure, and themselves unfit for the companionship of angels. The latter are "they who are written in the Lamb's book of life;" which words, as explained by Swedenborg, mean "they who believe in the Lord and live according to his commandments in the Word."

Now it is easy to see that among these latter there must exist an endless variety; for there are in-

numerable states or degrees of acknowledgment of the Lord, and of fidelity to the laws of life that He has revealed. And it is hardly to be expected that the people who are in these different states as to good and truth, will ever be gathered into any one religious organization. We should expect them to be distributed throughout many different organizations, and some outside of them all. And this reasonable expectation we find fully justified by the explicit teaching of the Writings. For the New Jerusalem, we are told, is "the Lord's kingdom in general" (A. C. n. 402), and 'his kingdom consists of all who are influenced by good." (N. J. D. n. 95.) It is "the communion of saints" —all God's children of whatever name—"scattered throughout the whole world, and consisting of those who are in love to Him and in charity toward the neighbor,"—"not only within the church [that is, within the bounds of Christendom] but outside of it also." (See A. C. n. 7396; T. C. R. nos. 307, 416.) From all of which the endless diversity in the New Jerusalem may be clearly seen.

Besides, the vital principle in this church—its living and ever active force—that which binds in one all its diverse parts, is the Lord's Divine-Human love, which, however, variously received, becomes in the recipients love to Him and charity toward the neighbor in different degrees. This is the one supreme doctrine everywhere taught in the

heavenly sense of the Divine Word; and is pre-eminently *the* doctrine of the New Jerusalem—the doctrine of the higher, even the heavenly life.

"The Word in its internal sense treats of nothing else but love to the Lord and the neighbor. Wherefore the Lord says that the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."—A. C. 3427.

"In general there is only one doctrine, viz., the doctrine of charity [or love]." (A. C. 2231.) "For all things called doctrines of faith lead to charity; they are all contained in charity, and are all derived from charity. The soul, after the body dies, is such as its love is."—Ibid. 2228.

"The whole of the sacred Scripture is nothing else but the doctrine of love or charity, which the Lord also teaches (Matt. xxii. 35–40)."—N. J. D. 9.

"The internal sense of the Word is the very doctrine of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor."—A. C. 9409.

"The all of doctrine in the Word, is from the Lord and concerning the Lord. In the internal sense of the Word nothing but the Lord and his kingdom is treated of; and the all of doctrine in the Word as it concerns man, is to worship Him and love Him." (A. C. 2859.) And to worship Him really and truly "is to act at all times from what is sincere and right, just and equitable, because the Lord so commands in his Word."—A. E. 325.

And this one doctrine of the Lord's true church,

is revealed even in the letter of the Word, and is therein declared to be sole and supreme.

"All doctrine appertaining to the church, is derived from the Word. . . . Howbeit the essential doctrine derived from the literal sense of the Word, is only one, viz., the doctrine of charity and love—of charity toward the neighbor and love to the Lord; for this doctrine and a life according to it, is the whole of the Word as the Lord teaches, Matt. xxii. 35–38."—A. C. 3445.

And this sole and supreme doctrine of the Word, is repeatedly declared to be *the* doctrine of the church signified by the New Jerusalem. And this is what we should expect if this church is really what it claims to be—the true church of the Lord, and "the crown of all preceding churches."

"The woman ["clothed with the sun," Rev. xii.] denotes the church [New Jerusalem] which is in the doctrine and thence in the life of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor. . . . And by the male child which the woman brought forth, is meant the doctrine of this church."—A. E. 721.

"This doctrine signified by the male child, is especially the doctrine of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, that is, the doctrine of the good of life."—Ibid. 724.

"The doctrine of the New Church, which is called the Holy Jerusalem, is the doctrine of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor."—Ibid. 732. See also 707, '20, '25, '30.

Again: If we turn to Swedenborg's exposition

of the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse, we shall find additional confirmation of the doctrine of unity with diversity in the Lord's true church. The first part of this chapter gives the number who were "sealed" out of each of the twelve tribes. And these "tribes," we are told, "signify those who are in genuine goods and truths" (A. E. 452), and therefore constitute "the Lord's internal church." (A. R. 363.) In other words, they are "all of the New Christian Heaven and the New Church, who will be in truths of doctrine derived from the good of love through the Word from the Lord." (A. R. 348.) These constitute the *internal* of the New Church.

But every church must have an *external* as well as an internal. It cannot exist without it. And the external is as truly a part of the church, and just as essential to its completeness, as the skin is a part of the body, and necessary to its completeness.

"There are some who are in the internal of the church, and others who are in its external; the former are few, but the latter are numerous; nevertheless where the internal church is, the external must be also, for the internal of the church cannot be separated from its external."—A. C. 6587.

Who, then, constitute the external, and who the internal of the New Christian Church? Swedenborg tells us:—

"The men of the internal church are those who have qualified their good by interior truths, such as those of the internal sense of the Word; but the men of the external church are those who have qualified their good by exterior truths, such as those of the literal sense of the Word."—A. C. n. 7840.

Again, and equally explicit, in his explanation of the meaning of that "great multitude" (Rev. vii. 9) which John beheld in vision after he had heard the number sealed from each of the twelve tribes. That great multitude, he says, "signifies all the rest who are not among the above recited [the one hundred and forty-four thousand], and yet are in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church, being those who compose the lowest heaven and the external church." (A. R. n. 363.) And in their number are included "all who are in the good of life according to the doctrinal tenets of their religion," which "*they believe* to be truths and goods," although they are not such; and all "who are in falsities from ignorance and from various religions," but who, nevertheless, "live well according to their religious dogmas;" for "what is false is not imputed to any one who lives well according to the dogmas of his religion."—A. E. 454, 455.

We learn from this that people may be in falsities from ignorance, or from instruction received from those whose opinions they revere, and yet be

"in the good of life." And we learn, further, that all of this class are "in the Lord's New Church," and are "numerous"—"a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

From the passages above cited (and many more of a kindred character might be added), it is plain that there is, or is to be, the same endless diversity in the Church signified by the New Jerusalem, that there is in the heaven of angels. Its teachings plainly point to this. Its foundation being broad as that of the angelic heavens, it should and will be as large, as catholic and inclusive in its nature and spirit. Its component parts will differ as widely as do the different organs in the human body; and there will be among them the same friendly recognition of each other, the same mutual regard and respect, the same harmonious co-operation, the same vital and fraternal union.

And any one who has carefully observed the tendencies of religious thought and the movements of religious bodies during the last half century—the growth of charity, religious toleration, freedom of inquiry, and something like genuine catholicity—cannot fail to see that there has been and continues to be a steady approximation by the better element in nearly all the churches, toward the true catholicism disclosed and inculcated in these pages. As the churches receive more and

more of the Divine Humanity, and thus become internally more and more truly human, they come into friendlier and more helpful relations,—assume a more genuinely human attitude toward each other. And as the doctrines and spirit of the New Jerusalem descend with ever-increasing fulness into the churches, making them more human in spirit, the time will surely come—it may be far distant yet—when the church on earth will be, in the aggregate, like the church in heaven, in the human form.

Should it be said that the organization known as the New Church has failed to exemplify adequately the catholic spirit and teachings of the New Jerusalem as exhibited in these pages, our reply is: Most undoubtedly. And none know this better, or are more willing to confess that the charge is too true, than the members of this organization themselves. Nor is this any more strange than that the spirit and teachings of the New Testament should have been so feebly illustrated by the lives and practices of professing Christians generally. But in the movement of the churches toward a truer charity, a grander catholicity, a larger liberty, and a higher unity, foreshadowing the ultimate attainment of a form of the church on earth akin to that of the church in heaven, it will not be denied that the new organization, so far as it is faithful to the revealings it

accepts, must and will in due time lead all the others. This is abundantly evident from passages like the following, which are of such frequent occurrence in its authorized Writings, as to form one of their most characteristic features.

"There are three essentials of the Church; an acknowledgment of the Lord's Divinity, an acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word, and the life which is called charity. . . . If these three had been held as the essentials of the Church, intellectual differences would not have divided but only varied it, as light varies the colors of beautiful objects, and as a variety of jewels constitutes the beauty of a kingly crown."—D. P. n. 259.

"Heaven exists wherever the Lord is acknowledged, believed in, and loved. Variety in the worship of Him arising from the variety of good in different societies, is not injurious but advantageous; for the perfection of heaven results from such variety. All perfection results from the harmonious arrangement of parts that are different.

"The same may be said of the church as of heaven, for the church is the Lord's heaven on earth. There are also many churches [or church organizations], and each one is called a church, and likewise is a church, so far as the good of love and faith rules therein. Here also the Lord makes a whole from different parts; that is, from several churches he makes one church."—H. H. 56, 57.

"If the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal point of faith, doctrinals would then have

been only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they who are true Christians would leave to every one to receive according to his conscience; while the language of their hearts would be, that he is a true Christian who lives like a Christian, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish; yea, all the animosities of one against another would be speedily dissipated, and the kingdom of the Lord would be established on earth."—A. C. n. 1799.

"The heart of the Grand Man, that is, of heaven and the church, is constituted of those who are in love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor. . . But the lungs in the Grand Man, or in heaven and the church, are constituted of those who from the Lord are in charity toward the neighbor and thence in faith. . . The rest of the viscera and members in that Grand Man, are constituted of those who are in external goods and truths, . . . by means of which internal goods and truths may be introduced. . . These three kinds of men constitute the church [that is, the *whole* Christian church, its 'internal,' 'external,' and 'extremes']."—Ibid. n. 9276.

"When love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, that is, the good of life, are made the essentials with all and with each individual, then churches, how many soever they may be, make one; and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord. This is also the case in respect to heaven where there are innumerable societies, all different from each other; but still they constitute one

heaven, because all are principled in love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor [but in different degrees]."—A. C. n. 2982.

"The varieties and differences of doctrinals [in the various churches] are innumerable. . . But notwithstanding there are so many varieties and differences, still they together form one church when all acknowledge charity as the essential of the church; or, what is the same, when they have respect to life as the end of doctrine; that is, when they inquire how a man of the church *lives*, and not so much what are his sentiments; for every one in the other life is gifted with a lot from the Lord according to the good of his life, not according to the truth of doctrine separate from this good."—Ibid. n. 3241.

"Since the Lord's kingdom or church on earth derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, it must needs be various and diverse as to those doctrinals; that is, one society will profess one thing to be a truth of faith, because it is so said in the Word; another society will profess another thing for the same reason; and so on. Consequently the church of the Lord, since it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, will differ in every different place; and this not only as to societies in general, but sometimes as to particular persons in each society. Nevertheless, a difference in doctrinals of faith is no reason why the church should not be one, provided only there be unanimity as to willing and doing what is good."—Ibid. n. 3451.

"All doctrinals whatsoever, if they are derived from the Word, are accepted of the Lord if the

person principled therein is in the life of charity; for to the life of charity all things which are of the Word may be conjoined; but the interior things of the Word are conjoined to the life which is in the interior good of charity."—A. C. n. 3452.

"There are some who are in genuine truths, some who are in truths not genuine, and some who are in falsities. And yet they who are in genuine truths are often damned; and they who are in truths not genuine, and who are even in falsities, are often saved. This will appear strange to most persons, but still it is true. Experience itself has confirmed it. For there have been seen in hell those who were more learned than others in the truths derived from the Word and from the doctrine of their Church, both dignitaries and others. And on the other hand, there have been seen in heaven those who were not in truths, also those who were in falsities, both Christians and Gentiles. The reason that the former were in hell, is, that they were indeed in truths as to doctrine, but in evils as to life; and the reason that the latter were in heaven, is, that they were indeed in non-truths or [falsities] as to doctrine, but yet were in good as to life."—Ibid. n. 9192.

"They who belong to this heaven [the first or lowest] are all in the state of obeying or doing the truths and goods commanded in the Word, or in the doctrine of the church in which they were born, or by their master or teacher from whom they have heard that this or that is true and good, and consequently is to be done. The greater part of such persons are not in genuine truths, but are in falsities from ignorance; which falsities are

nevertheless accepted by the Lord as truths, because they have for their end the good of life."—A. E. n. 443.

"Goods are of infinite variety, and they have their quality from truths. Hence the good becomes such as are the truths which enter. These truths are seldom genuine, but are appearances of truth,—and are also falsities, but still not opposite to truths; nevertheless when these flow-in into good, which happens when the life is formed according to them from ignorance wherein there is innocence, and when the end is to do good, then such falsities are regarded by the Lord and in heaven *not* as falsities, but as bearing a resemblance to truths; and they are accepted as truths according to the quality of innocence [in the recipient subjects]."—A. C. n. 7887.

"It is very common for those who have conceived an opinon respecting any truth of faith, to judge of others that they cannot be saved except by believing as they do; which, nevertheless, the Lord forbids (see Matt. vii. 1, 2). Accordingly it has been made known to me by much experience, that persons of every religion are saved, if so be, by a life of charity, they have received remains of good and of apparent truth." —Ibid. 2284.

"In many instances those who are principled in some particular doctrine, even though it be heretical, think none can be saved who are outside of their own pale, or who do not believe precisely as they do. The reverse, however, is the fact. For the Lord has mercy toward the whole human race,

and desires to save all universally, and to draw them to Himself. His mercy is infinite, and does not suffer itself to be confined to the small number within the church [that is, in Christendom], but is extended to all throughout the world."—A. C. n. 1032.

XII.

CATHOLICISM OF THE GOSPEL.

THE catholicism unfolded and presented in the foregoing pages, is none other than that of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. This is shown by the copious quotations from the authorized teachings of this Church, which claims to be a true Church deriving all its doctrines "from God out of heaven," whence the New Jerusalem was seen descending (Rev. xxi. 10); or, what is equivalent, deriving them from the Divine Word, as understood and interpreted by one to whom heaven was opened, and who was prepared and divinely illumined and commissioned for this special purpose.

It has been clearly shown that this Church is not a mere sect, distinguished primarily by its doctrines, like the various denominations in Christendom. It has none of the narrow and exclusive spirit of sect. It is broad and inclusive as the kingdom of heaven. It is the Lord's kingdom on earth, composed of all his patient, humble, faithful and obedient children—all who have been baptized with his baptism, and had their hearts in some measure imbued with his loving spirit. Its

members are not confined to any particular sect, but are scattered among them all; for among all the sects are to be found some sincere and humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; some who fulfil the requirements of the two primary precepts of our religion, which require us to love the Lord with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves. And not a few of its members will doubtless be found among those of no sect, and who are not connected with any religious organization.

Among the members of this Church there exists, as we have seen, great diversity both in doctrine and ritual. But this diversity rather increases than lessens its perfection. Such is the case with the Lord's kingdom or church in heaven. Why, then, should it not be so with his kingdom or church on earth? That there is in the church a variety like that in heaven, is often affirmed by Swedenborg. He says:—

"The perfection of heaven results from variety in the different societies there. . . The same may be said of the church as of heaven, for the church is the Lord's heaven upon earth. There are also many churches, each one of which is called a church, and likewise is a church so far as the good of love and truth rules therein. There also the Lord makes a whole from parts that are different; that is, from several churches He makes one church."—H. H. 56, 57.

In a marginal note to this passage, we are told,

"that if good [or charity] were the characteristic and essential of the church, and not truth without good, the church would be one;" and the author refers for confirmation and illustration to the following numbers in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, 1285, 1316, 2982, 3241, 3267, 3445, 3451, 3452. These numbers are all interesting and instructive. In one of them he speaks of the ancient churches, and says:—

"There was a difference among them *as at this day* in regard to doctrinals; but still they made one in this, that they acknowledged love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor as the principal and very essential constituents of a church." And immediately he adds: "When this is the case, that love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor are made essentials with all and each individual, then churches, how many soever they may be, make one, and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord."—2982.

In another of these numbers we are told that,—

"When different churches are all principled in charity or mutual love, they have all one end, viz., the common good, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord himself; in which case the varieties in matters of doctrine and worship are like the varieties of the senses and viscera in man, which contribute to the perfection of the whole man."—1285.

In another, where the Lord's spiritual church is spoken of, and is said to be "everywhere various according to articles of belief or truths of faith," it is added:—

"The Lord's spiritual kingdom itself in the heavens is also thus circumstanced, viz.: it is various according to what appertains to faith, insomuch that there is not one society, nor even one in a society, who, in those things which relate to the truth of faith, is entirely agreed with others as to his ideas. Nevertheless the Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is one, for the reason that all account charity the principal thing."—3267.

And in another it is said:—

"Inasmuch as the church of the Lord derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, it will differ in every different place. . . Nevertheless, a difference in doctrinals of faith is no reason why the church should not be one, provided only there be unanimity as to willing and doing what is good." —3451.

Then, after citing some examples to show how a person who is in error as to doctrine, may still have "the Lord's church or kingdom in him," the author refers, at the close of the paragraph, to no less than *twenty-three* other numbers in the *Arcana*, where may be found a further elucidation of such propositions as these: "That charity, and not doctrinal tenets, constitutes the church."—"That the church is various as to truths, but is made one by charity."—"That there is but one single doctrine, viz., that of love to the Lord and of charity toward our neighbor."—"That the church would be one if all had charity, notwithstanding they differed as to worship and doctrinals."—"That the church

would be as the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, if all had charity."

In another number Swedenborg assures us that "all doctrinals whatsoever, if derived from the Word, are accepted of the Lord if the person principled therein be in the life of charity."—A. C. 3452. And in the last line of the paragraph he invites our special attention to a previous number, in these words: "See what was said and adduced above on this subject, n. 3324." And "this subject" is the acceptance of persons who are in false doctrines (but "grounded in the literal sense of the Word"), provided they are "in the life of charity." And the number to which we are here referred, is one of the most remarkable in the *Arcana Cœlestia.* It occupies four octavo pages, and more than *three-fourths* of these consist of mere references (in all, 159!) to other numbers; the purpose of most of which is, to show the priority and superiority of good to truth, or of charity to faith, and the possible existence of the former along with many errors of doctrine, and its possible non-existence where many truths are known and believed. We quote a few of these references to show the emphasis which the authorized teachings of the New Church place upon character or life, rather than on mere doctrine or belief.

"That good makes to itself the truth to which it may be conjoined, n. 3161. That to look from

faith [or doctrine] and not from love and charity, is to look behind one's self, and to return back, n. 2454. That a knowledge of the doctrinals of faith is of no account if a man has not charity, n. 2049, 2116. That doctrinals do not constitute the church, but that charity does, n. 809, 916, 1798, 1799, 1834, 1844. That the doctrinals of a church are nothing unless men live according to them, n. 1515. That every one may know from charity whether he has the internal principle of worship, n. 1102, 1151, 1153. That the Lord's church throughout the earth is everywhere various as to truths, but that it is one by charity, n. 3267. That the church would be one if all had charity, although they might differ as to rituals and doctrinals, n. 1809, 1285, 1316, 1798, 1799, 1834, 1844. That out of many churches there would be made one, if all accounted charity and not faith the essential of the church, n. 2982."—A. C. n. 3324.

Such is the clearly revealed character of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem. So broad and inclusive in its nature, so catholic in its spirit and teachings. So emphatically does it exalt charity above faith—life above doctrine. In point of catholicity it stands in striking contrast with the churches that have preceded it. It is plain to be seen that its catholicism is identical with that of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Whoever reads the New Testament with close attention, will see that the Gospel nowhere demands assent to a system of doctrines. It nowhere makes *belief*—save in the Lord Jesus Christ him-

self—a test of Christian discipleship. Its two great commandments—those which contain the substance of all the rest—those on which it is said, "hang all the law and the prophets"—are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself;" and it is added: "There is none other commandment greater than these." And Paul, the prince of apostles, says that "love is the fulfilling of the law;" and pronounces charity "the greatest" among Christian graces, adding: "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

And the promises of the Gospel are not to those who *believe* this or that doctrine, but to those whose *hearts* are imbued with something of the Lord's own spirit and life—whose ends and aims are pure and unselfish. Its blessing is pronounced upon the meek, the merciful, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the seekers after righteousness—graces all pertaining to the will and not to the intellect. And the uniform teaching of the Divine Master is: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven."—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and *doeth* them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock."—"Ye are my friends if ye *do* whatsoever I command

you."—"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."—"He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it."—"He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."—"My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God, and *do* it."—"If ye *keep my commandments* ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—"This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you."—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—"If ye love me, *keep my commandments*, and I will pray my Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."—"They that *have done good*, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that *have done evil*, unto the resurrection of damnation."—"And, behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according *as his work shall be*."—"Blessed are they that *do his commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Such is the catholicism of the Gospel of our Lord. Such the test of Christian discipleship. Such the sum and substance of the Christian religion, according to the testimony of its divine Founder. It is not mere *belief* in any system of doctrines however true and beautiful. It is some-

thing more and higher than this. It is accepting and following after Christ. It is hearing and doing his precepts. It is losing our life for his sake. It is bearing much fruit. It is keeping God's commandments, and thereby entering into his love —opening our hearts to the quickening influences of his Spirit—learning to love and serve one another as He loves and forever seeks to save and bless mankind. It is crucifying the natural *proprium*—dying as to the old hereditary life of self-love and love of the world, and living a new life in and from that Divine-Human Love which is Life Itself and the Source of all true human life. And this may be done—we cannot doubt that it *is* done —by thousands and tens of thousands who have and read and reverence God's Word, but have never read a page of Swedenborg.

And this grand catholicism of the Gospel is seen to be identical with that of the New Jerusalem as unfolded in these pages; for the spirit of the New Jerusalem is the spirit of the Gospel—the spirit of the Lord in his Divine Humanity. And this spirit does not detract from the beauty or worth of the highest truths. It does not tend to the undervaluing of any of the precious verities of the New Jerusalem. On the contrary, it renders its truths doubly dear and attractive, just as a beautiful woman becomes more beautiful and interesting when seen to possess those tender and humane

feelings which incite to broad and generous charities;—which prompt her to seek out the poor, the ignorant, the sick and the sorrowing, and extend a sympathetic and helping hand to the lowly children of toil and want. In like manner the large and catholic spirit of the New Christian Church gives additional lustre to its beautiful and sublime truths. It is, and must ever remain, one of their highest recommendations to all earnest and liberal minds; for such minds instinctively recognize in this spirit something akin to the Lord and heaven. In exhibiting the catholicism of the New Jerusalem, therefore, we are demonstrating to some extent the heavenly origin of the church thereby signified, and possibly may kindle in some hearts the desire to know more of its exalted and precious truths. The best minds are offended and repelled by bigotry, while they are as uniformly conciliated and attracted by genuine catholicity. Let it be seriously proclaimed as the belief of any sect that *its own* members alone are Christians—that they alone constitute the Lord's kingdom on earth—and thoughtful people will hardly care to inquire further into the beliefs of such sect. It will, indeed, be a wonder if they do not turn from it with loathing and disgust.

I repeat, then—and the reader will admit the truth of the assertion—that the catholicism of the New Jerusalem is the catholicism of the Gospel.

This Church rejects none whom Jesus Christ accepts, disowns none whom He owns, unchurches none whom He welcomes to his fold. On the contrary, she throws her arms lovingly around all his humble followers of whatever name or creed, acknowledges as bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh all who acknowledge and love and serve Him; and like a true mother, "the Lamb's wife," fondly cherishes as her own children all who have "the Father's name written in their foreheads."

XIII.

TRUTH A MEANS, NOT AN END.

THE careful reader cannot have failed to discover the important conclusion to which the previous discussion has conducted. It is none other than this: That men are accepted or rejected of Christ, not on account of the doctrines they profess, the truths they believe, or the ritual they observe, but on account of the motives from which they uniformly act, the good or evil they intend and do, and the kind of life which is thereby developed within them. CHARACTER—not as it may reveal itself outwardly to the eyes of men, but as it *is* inwardly in the sight of Him who seeth in secret—this, and no mere creed however true or perfect, is the important thing to be kept steadily in view.

All who have the spirit of Christ are his children, and are therefore owned and accepted of Him, whatever amount of doctrinal error they may have innocently and unconsciously imbibed; and all who have *not* his spirit are none of his, whatever doctrines they may profess, or whatever amount of truth they may understand and believe. It is not the understanding and believing, but the willing

and loving—not the knowing but the doing of the Heavenly Father's will, which is the ground of acceptance with Him, and the test of Christian discipleship. It is possible to have much heavenly light in the understanding, with but little of heavenly warmth in the will. And so, too, there may be many errors in the head, with much of God's love in the heart. But it is the state of each one's heart which determines his character. If it be the supreme and governing purpose of his life to know and do the will of the Lord, his heart is right in the sight of his Maker, and his character has, and is continually receiving more and more, the impress of heaven. But if he loves himself above all things, and the perishable things of this world as himself, his heart is not in conjunction with the Divine; he is a stranger to the Lord's unselfish love; the warmth and bloom and fragrance of Eden are not his; his character is not of the heavenly type, for his dominant love is of the earth, earthy—the very opposite of that which rules in heaven.

To know what is our real character, then—our character as revealed to the eye of Omniscience—we must know what our ruling love is. We must know whether our supreme and governing purpose be to serve the Lord by doing good to the neighbor, or to serve self by clutching as many as we can of the good of this world, and rendering as

little service as possible to the neighbor. This is an infallible test of character—a test which every one may employ in determining his own—viz.: What is our ruling purpose? What is our *end* in life—the end to which our thoughts are chiefly directed, and to the attainment of which all other acquisitions, both natural and spiritual, are held subordinate? Is it to serve God and the neighbor? Or is it to obtain the honors and riches of this world for the mere gratification of pride and self-love? If the former, we are on the direct way to heaven; if the latter, we are as surely on the road to hell.

A truly good and heavenly character can result only from cherishing pure motives and pursuing heavenly ends; while the opposite kind of character is as sure to result from cherishing base motives and pursuing selfish and worldly ends. It is the *end* that a man aims at, therefore, and not the truth he accepts or the doctrine he believes, which determines his real character. So that a person may be said to be altogether such as his end is. It is the ends we seek, and not the truths or falsities we believe, that make or mar within us the image of our Lord. It is these that draw the angels near us, or drive them far away. Accordingly Swedenborg says:—

"Man's ruling end is his very essential life; for he respects as an end what appertains to his life, or, what is the same thing, what appertains to his

love. When the good of his neighbor, the general good, the good of the church and of the Lord's kingdom, is the end regarded, then the man as to his soul is in the Lord's kingdom; for the Lord's kingdom is nothing else but a kingdom of ends and uses respecting the good of the human race. The very angels attendant on man have their abode solely in his ends of life. So far as a man has respect to an end of a like quality with what influences the Lord's kingdom, so far the angels are delighted with him, and conjoin themselves to him as to a brother; but so far as a man is influenced by selfish ends, so far the angels recede, and evil spirits from hell draw near; for in hell none but selfish ends have rule. From these considerations it may be seen of what concern it is for every one to explore and know the origin of his affection, which can only be known from its end."—A. C. 3796.

Now it is easy to see that people who hold different doctrines respecting the Trinity, the Atonement, the plan of Redemption, the philosophy of Regeneration, the nature and time of the Resurrection, etc., may yet have similar *ends* in life. We can see that they may all regard as ends "the good of the neighbor, the general good, the good of the church and of the Lord's kingdom." And if they do, however they may differ externally, or in their doctrinal beliefs, they are near akin when viewed internally. They are alike in respect to their ruling purpose. They have all one Master, Christ,—and are, therefore, all brethren. If, as

Swedenborg declares, "man is altogether such as is the *end* which rules him," and these people are ruled by similar ends, then they must be internally and spiritually alike. Notwithstanding their intellectual or doctrinal differences, they all belong to the household of Christ, and constitute portions of one and the same Christian church.

But let no one imagine from what has been said in the foregoing pages, that truth is of no more value than error, or that it is a matter of small consequence what a man believes. The New Church authorizes no such conclusion. On the contrary, it holds and teaches that a man's belief is a matter of great importance. It teaches that the more and higher truth one receives, so much the more abundantly is he furnished with the *means* of an exalted and noble character—the means of a pure and heavenly life. To cite a few passages from the authorized teachings of this Church:—

"There are some of all denominations within the church, who are endowed with conscience; though their conscience, nevertheless, is more perfect in proportion as the truths which form it approach nearer to the genuine truths of faith."—A. C. 2053.

"All truths are vessels receptive of good; therefore in proportion as truths are more genuine and more numerous, good becomes more capable of

taking them as vessels, and of reducing them to order, and finally of manifesting itself; till at length the truths no longer appear only so far as good is translucent through them."—A. C. 2063.

"With those who are reformed and regenerated, charity, which is the essential celestial life, is in a continual birth and growth and receiving of increase, and this by means of truths; therefore the more truth is insinuated, so much the more is the life of charity perfected. Consequently the state of charity in man is according to the quality and amount of truth in him."—Ibid. 2189.

"In proportion as truths with man are more genuine, the Divine which flows-in is more perfectly received, and in the same proportion man's intellectual principle is enlightened. . . The rational of those who are in the truths of the internal sense of the Word, as to doctrine and at the same time *as to life*, is so far enlightened that their illumination is compared to the brightness of the stars and of the sun, Dan. xii. 3; Matt. xiii. 43." —Ibid. 2531. See also 2831, 2269.

From these passages we learn the exceeding value of spiritual truth as a means to the attainment of the higher life. The purer and more abundant it is, the higher and nobler the life that is placed within our reach. Men should search for truth, therefore, as for hid treasure, counting it a pearl of great price. They should strive to attain the highest views of truth which they are capable of comprehending and receiving. But let

them guard against the fatal tendency—a tendency so common in all unregenerate hearts—to exalt truth to the supreme place. Let them see that they regard it not as an *end*, but only as a *means* to a righteous life.

"Doctrinals and articles of faith [including all spiritual truth] are not faith, but are only things belonging to faith; for all and each of them are given as a means to this end, viz.: to make a man such as they teach him to be. This is evident from the Lord's words where He teaches that the law and all the prophets, that is, the whole doctrine of faith [in other words, the great *end* to which all truth points and for which it is given], consists in love to God and love toward our neighbor (Matt. xxii. 34–39)."—A. C. 2116.

"Truth is the instrument [or means] of good... Things instrumental should not be regarded as ends, but things essential should be; for so far as instruments are regarded as ends, in the same degree essentials withdraw themselves and vanish." —Ibid. 5948.

"Scientifics and also truths should be objects of regard, but they must regard good as their end. If a man has good for an end, he is then in sight of things consequent, or in the perception of things derived from good; but this perception is in no case given, unless good be the end, that is, unless this end rule universally in all and in every single thing... To regard anything as an end, is to love it above all other things, for what a man loves he regards as an end."—Ibid. 5949.

Regarded intrinsically, and for itself alone, truth has a value but little if any above that of material wealth. And if not employed in the securing of heavenly treasures—if not applied to the searching out and removing of the heart's deep corruptions—it is certain, some day, to take to itself wings and fly away.

When people come to attach more importance to what they *believe* than to how they *live*, they elevate truth above its appropriate sphere. They no longer regard it as a means, but look upon it as an end. Then faith is exalted above charity; doctrine is placed before life; believing is made paramount to doing; the slightest deviation from the creed is watched by secret and self-appointed detectives; suspicions of heresy go buzzing through the air, like locusts with stings in their tails; some of the best men and women are ostracized—perhaps anathematized; peace and harmony and unity are destroyed; and a state of things results resembling more nearly that in hell than that in heaven. Where doctrine or mere belief is thus exalted, the believers are really *in* the dogma of "faith alone," however emphatically they may repudiate that doctrine with their lips.

But multitudes who have been taught false doctrines, have, nevertheless, through penitence and prayer and devout reading and study of the Word and a life of steadfast obedience, been made

partakers in a large measure of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. The Comforter has come unto them, graciously fulfilling the divine prediction, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." It is a mistake to judge the spiritual state of these people by the creeds they have subscribed. They are wiser and better than their creeds. Many of them are gifted with spiritual perception. Love to the Lord and the neighbor, which is the life and soul of all truth, is in their hearts. Therefore, when they read the Word, their understandings are enlightened in regard to its meaning. Having in their hearts the spirit of truth, they are guided by that spirit into all truth needful for their purification. By faithfully *doing* the Master's will, they are made receptive of his Spirit, and are thus given "to *know* of the doctrine," agreeable to his own promise. This, too, is the teaching of Swedenborg. For he assures us that "*every one* has illustration according to the quality of his affection for truth; and the quality of the affection for truth is such *as the good of life is.*"—A. C. 7012. And, speaking of those "who are in the affection of truth from good, and thence in the desire of growing wise," he says:—

"Every one is enlightened and instructed from the Word according to his affection for truth and the degree of his desire for it, and according to his

faculty of receiving; for they who are in illustration, are in the light of heaven as to their internal man; for the light of heaven is what enlightens man in the truths and goods of faith. They who are thus enlightened, apprehend the Word as to its interiors; therefore they, from the Word, *make for themselves doctrine*, to which they apply the sense of the letter. But they who are not in the affection of truth from good, and thence in the desire of growing wise, are more blinded than enlightened when they read the Word; for they are not in the light of heaven."—A. C. 9382.

"By revelation is meant illustration [or enlightenment] when the Word is read, and in such case perception; for they who are in good and desire truth, are so taught from the Word. . . The reason why these have revelation, and they who are in evil have not, is, that all and singular things in the internal sense of the Word, treat of the Lord and his kingdom, and the angels attendant on man perceive the Word according to the internal sense; this is communicated to the man who is in good, and reads the Word, and desires truth from affection; . . . for the understanding of such a man is open into heaven, and his soul or internal man is in consort with the angels."—Ibid. 8694.

"They who are in the love of truth for truth's sake, and not for the sake of self and the world, are enlightened in the Word when they read it, and see truth, and *make for themselves* doctrine. The reason of this is, that such persons communicate with heaven, thus with the Lord; and being enlightened by Him, they are led to see the truths of the Word as they are seen in heaven, for the Lord

flows-in through heaven into their understandings."—A. C. 9424. See also n. 3773, 8780, 9405; A. E. 190.

From what has now been said, and from the quotations made from the authorized Writings, the reader will see that the New Christian Church—broad and inclusive as it is—does by no means undervalue or lightly esteem spiritual truth. On the contrary it teaches that men are everywhere enlightened, regenerated and saved *by means* of this truth. Even they whose creeds are burdened with error, and who have imbibed many false doctrines from their religious teachers, are still blessed with a large amount of truth touching their duty to God and their fellow-men. And if they are obedient to the dictates of duty, and earnestly strive to do the Divine will *as they understand it*, they have the Holy Spirit to enlighten and guide them; they receive truth by an internal way superior to what is taught in their creeds; they are gifted with perception; and therefore, when they read the Word, "they make for themselves doctrine" under the enlightening influence of that Spirit which the Saviour promised should guide his disciples into all truth. Even these, therefore, are not saved without truth, but solely through its instrumentality.

Yes: It is the truth which shows us our true spiritual condition; which reveals the real nature

of the hell within us, and shows us how it is to be subdued; which points the way to that heaven or state of bliss for which we were all created, and encourages us to walk therein; which discloses the dangers and the subtle snares that continually beset our pathway; which opens and reveals to our inner consciousness something of the Divine nature—something of that supreme Goodness, that unutterable Love, signified by the Father in the heavens. Only through the instrumentality of divine truth, and by religious obedience to its requirements, can we be brought into a state of blissful conjunction with the essential Divine Love—the Father; as saith the incarnate Word when speaking as the very Truth Itself, "No one cometh unto the Father but by me."

XIV.

CONCLUSION.

THE theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg so often and extensively quoted in the foregoing pages, are regarded by all who have studied them thoroughly, as the writings of a man who was specially prepared for one of the sublimest of human missions;—of a man who was divinely illumined and commissioned to open for us the deep and heavenly meaning of the Sacred Scripture, and to teach therefrom the true doctrines of the Christian religion. His writings, therefore, contain the doctrinal teachings of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem, and hence are often spoken of as the divinely authorized teachings of this Church.

The reader must judge for himself whether the Catholicism set forth in the copious extracts herein made from these Writings, be of such a character as to justify the high claim advanced for them touching their nature and origin. Is it what the title of this book declares—the *true* Catholicism? Does it reflect the large, reasonable, merciful and loving spirit of the Gospel—the spirit of

our Divine Lord and Master? Is it wholesome and benign in its practical tendency? Is it altogether worthy of the heavenly origin claimed for it?

If these questions must all be answered in the affirmative, then the reader may fairly presume that the teachings of Swedenborg on other subjects are what they claim to be—a revelation of new truth from God out of heaven, higher and purer than the church has hitherto known, and calculated to develop or build up a higher and nobler life. And if he pursues the inquiry with candor and some degree of thoroughness, he will shortly find his reasonable presumption settling into an absolute truth,—supported, too, by such an overwhelming weight of evidence, that belief will be found far easier than denial or doubt. He will find all the doctrines of the Christian religion as set forth and expounded in these Writings, as much superior in point of consistency, rationality, Scripturalness, and practical utility, to anything heretofore formulated in the creeds or taught in the old theologies, as the Catholicism unfolded and exhibited in these pages is superior to anything hitherto found in religious books or embodied in the symbols of any of the churches.

It is incumbent on all who accept or profess these new doctrines, to seek, in their teachings, as well as in their relations and intercourse with

other Christians, to illustrate the Catholic spirit of the New Jerusalem as disclosed in the foregoing pages;—to acknowledge—not merely with the lips, but in life and practice—that all who truly love the Lord and are in charity toward the neighbor, however they may differ from us in doctrinals, are owned and accepted of the dear Redeemer, and constitute a portion of his family and household. They may thus do much to weaken and dissipate the silly prejudice against the doctrines of heaven that still prevails extensively, and win for these doctrines the favorable regard of multitudes who need their enlightening and comforting power. But bigotry and sectarian exclusiveness belong to the Old Dispensation, not to the New; and their manifestation is sure to repel the most thoughtful, progressive and liberal minds.

Let the Catholicism unfolded and presented in these pages, be received and acted upon by Christians generally, and what a change would be wrought in nearly all existing churches! No longer expecting or desiring a dead uniformity in matters of faith, seeing that this is not according to divine order, the utmost degree of intellectual freedom would be everywhere respected and encouraged. New views of truth that often dawn on waiting minds, would cease to alarm or disturb. Church schisms arising from unequal mental

growth, different degrees of regeneration, and the occasional introduction of new views by some, would no longer exist. There would be no room for schism. The heresy-hunter's occupation would be at an end. Quiet churches would no longer be thrown into convulsions by the suspicion, or the more terrible whispers, that their minister is departing from the "standards." Live clergymen would spring up in a thousand pulpits, where now are only dead ones. Mr. Dryasdust would begin to give his people something besides mere creed-gleanings and doctrinal expositions with "proof-texts." Deacon Fossil and his tribe would have a higher and worthier object in going to church, than measuring the prayers and sermon by the Confession of Faith. The bigot-maker's trade would be given up, since there would no longer be a demand for his wares. Neighboring ministers would find something better to do, than to array their congregations against each other merely on the ground of some difference in doctrine. Towns and villages of one or two thousand inhabitants, would no longer be divided into a half-dozen worshiping congregations, because of the essential importance which each one attaches to his own particular views; but they would together form one church and congregation, with charity for the fundamental article of their creed. Men would be held in esteem, not on account of their beliefs,

but on account of their lives. Sects might still remain, but the pernicious and hateful spirit of sect would be cast out. Christian life and character—a meek and gentle temper, patience in suffering, resignation under trial, a noble self-forgetfulness and self-denial, a generous devotion to the good of others, an unswerving love of justice, a firm and unwavering trust in Divine Providence, a brave, humble, forbearing, loving and forgiving spirit—these, accompanied by a devout acknowledgment of Him from whom all good dispositions and all right feelings proceed, would be held up as the supreme objects of desire, and surer tests of Christian discipleship than any mere form of faith or articles of belief. There would be but one party in all the churches, and this the party of freedom and progress and devotion to high and noble ends; the party seeking, as its grand and supreme object, an inward spiritual renewal after the image of the Lord Jesus Christ; the party bent on overcoming, in the strength of the Lord, the kingdom of Satan everywhere—the demons of pride, avarice, selfishness, sensuality, and all infernal inclinations which defile the sanctuary of the human heart, and establishing in their stead the opposite heavenly dispositions—Christ's own kingdom of righteousness, purity and peace.

Let the Catholicism herein proclaimed be generally received and adopted and carried into prac-

tice, and these results cannot fail to follow. That principle which in ancient times united so many and various churches into one, still retains its original potency, and is able to do the very same to-day, provided it be acknowledged as fundamental in the church. It *is* fundamental in the Christian system—so taught, and often with strong emphasis, in the revelations made for the New Christian Church—so declared by the great Author and Founder of our religion, the Lord Christ Jesus himself. Let all his professed followers accept it as such, and govern their lives accordingly, and its transforming power would soon be seen, and its wondrous influence be felt.

THE END.

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OPINION OF THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW.

The following is copied from the July (1882) number of the *New-Church Review*, and is from the pen of a competent critic, and one of the most intelligent and scholarly ministers in the New Church.

"Of the 'Swedenborg Library,' as edited by Mr. Barrett, and published in the neat, elegant and attractive little quartos, we may justly say that it will be hard to find any other printed matter in the world, which will so worthily occupy an equal twelve inches of shelf-room. This little Library is a specialty, indeed. It is devoted to one and only one theological system, but that a very catholic and comprehensive one; so that there is hardly a principle in science or philosophy, a question of morals, or of life, or of death, or of the here, or of the hereafter, that is not elucidated in it. But it is analytic also, and so thoroughly and admirably so, that we find here its peculiar value, not only to the world at large but to the New Churchman himself, to whom the theology here presented is already tolerably familiar.

"In calling attention to the SWEDENBORG LIBRARY in these pages, we have not in view so much to advertise the work, already far more widely known than is the REVIEW, as to dwell upon certain features which commend the books, especially to the familiar and constant use of the New Church, especially in the family and in the instruction of youth.

"We need say but little about the advantages the Library offers to the world at large. The handy and inexpensive, yet thoroughly tasteful little volumes, speak for themselves, and are sure to find a welcome entry into thousands of homes and libraries where the more sombre and stately volumes of the complete

editions of the author, or the more elaborate and ponderous single treatises, would be politely declined admission. The advertising circular calls attention to some of the 'distinguishing merits and obvious advantages of this series,' enumerating among these its cheapness, its convenient size, its attractiveness, its compactness and brevity of statement, and the aid it affords to the reader in its classification of subjects. It is especially the last-named feature which commends the work, in our judgment, and which puts the New Church, as well as the general reading public, under special obligation to the painstaking editor of this series.

"The diffuseness of Swedenborg's style has been the general complaint urged by most novitiate readers, and the very vastness of the field his writings cover, makes the investigation of them seem at first an almost hopeless task. Just where to turn for enlightenment on this or that special topic, has not been always at the command of well-read New Churchmen, without the aid of the somewhat rare indexes; and then no little time is consumed in searching for passages, in half a dozen volumes it may be.

"Now we would not think for a moment of recommending this analysis of the writings by Mr. Barrett as a substitute for any student to adopt in any thorough or fundamental investigation of any topic. The editor never intended them for this use. He refers his readers to the complete works of Swedenborg for the thorough and final study of any of these subjects. But we are free to say that for a ready reference and a convenient summary of what Swedenborg has said on any of the themes here mentioned, we do not know where to look for a more valuable work than this. Moreover, it is of the first importance that in the study of any subject there should be an order and

a progressive classification of truths, as well as an analysis. And here is where we have found much to admire in these little books.

"With the helpfulness of this orderly arrangement of the contents, we have been especially impressed in Vol. I., on 'Death, Resurrection and the Judgment,' and in Vol. VIII., on 'Creation, Incarnation, Redemption and the Trinity.' Any one can see at a glance that this is the natural order of these topics when considered together, and the plan of the respective volumes is arranged accordingly. But few have thought, perhaps, what a complete whole each of these groups makes when thus considered together, and what a clearly defined and lasting impress a careful study of such a treatise must leave in any thinking mind. . . .

"Take this little book on Death, etc., Vol. I. Here a man is literally introduced into the spiritual world at the threshold. He is led upward through the process of physical dying, having first been described in his real being, that is, as consisting of a spiritual and immortal body, clothed on earth with a temporary material one. Arriving in the spiritual world he is shown what manner of life the spiritual body leads; then he is led through the several stages of the resurrection, or the development of the real man out of all the outside concealments which in some measure attend him even into the world of spirits, until at length he is brought to that knowledge of his real, abiding, unchangeable character or fitness for heaven or hell, which constitutes the judgment. Then is briefly described the quality of the life in heaven and in hell, and some practical guides for us all as to 'the way that leads to heaven,' while we are still undergoing the discipline of earth. The little book is a wonderful mariner's chart for a world that reaches

out into eternity. It will suffice for all the funeral discourses that ever need be uttered, so far as instruction goes; and it tells a man more of what he is made of, than all the volumes of ancient or modern philosophy put together. And yet this is but one of these little treatises.

"In Vol. VIII. the arrangement is indeed drawn from the author's *True Christian Religion;* but the subject of creation is wonderfully elucidated by the citations from the *Divine Love and Wisdom.* No system of pure philosophy could present a more orderly or logical sequence than is here observed, in starting out first with *God as the sole Creative Substance*, then discussing the materials, the form and process of creation by the method of discrete degrees, then the ends or uses of creation, then the completed creation or universe, as an image of the infinite; then the influx of spirit into nature, or the relation of matter to life and of the natural to the spiritual world. From this primary discussion the book proceeds to the descent of Jehovah God into the created world or into nature as man, for the purpose of the redemption and salvation of the human race. This embraces the discussion of the Incarnation, of the union of Humanity with Divinity in the Lord; also the wars with the power of evil, or the 'conflict with the hells,' by which the Lord succored mankind and restored the race to spiritual liberty and to the light of divine truth; and finally, the Holy Spirit and its operation, and the divine Trinity, what it is and what it is not; and the Divine Providence as directing the formulating of the Christian creeds, teaching a trinity of persons with a view to protecting the Christian church from Arianism, or the utter rejection of the Lord's Divinity until the time of his second coming, to show us in Himself, 'plainly of the Father;'—this sublime progress of

truths is here unfolded to the reader with an admirable order, conciseness and simplicity of arrangement, which makes the study of the subject an attractive one, and leaves a most satisfying impression, because clear and well defined.

"We might instance the features of others of these volumes which have especially delighted us; but the chief merit in all, is this excellent arrangement by which the reader finds so conveniently at hand a brief survey of the most interesting truths on the subject before him. For purposes of religious culture, or for devotional reading as a spiritual exercise most healthful for every Christian, we cannot too highly commend the volume on *Free Will*, *Repentance*, *Reformation* and *Regeneration*, as a most practical and genuinely useful guide to a man's everyday thoughts and character.

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